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Biography

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MY CRYSTAL BALL



Photograph by Campbell Studios

ELISABETH MARBURY

Frontispiece

My Crystal Ball



Reminiscences

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By

ELISABETH MARBURY

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WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON: HURST AND BLACKETT, LTD.

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To
ELSIE DE WOLFE
my friend

Together we sorrowed
Together we rejoiced
Together we failed
Together we succeeded

The distances of life were always bridged
because our faith has been large in the skill
of that great sculptor Time, who would shape
our friendship to a perfect end.

PREFACE

HAVING neither record nor note-book these pages from memory were written in long hand between the hours of four and six a.m., when in my room there was that silence which allowed the still small voices to be heard.

June 1, 1923.

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coughing, sneezing, holding on to my head and giving every evidence of an approaching malady.

I watched with inward delight the departure of my father and mother, of my three brothers, of my one sister and of the servants ; only the cook remained, to prepare our midday meal. This was my chance. I sneaked into the store-closet. I sat my chubby little person on the floor and began to eat the forbidden fruit. I had Adam and Eve discounted, for I ate six green bananas at one fell swoop. That night I writhed in agony. I heard my distracted mother and our kindly family physician racking their brains as to what had caused my illness. I stolidly refused to explain—until suddenly I heard fear expressed that my hours might be numbered. Then all the Sunday-school threats of eternal damnation flashed before my eyes. Hell fire was sizzling. Red devils were dancing. Three-pronged forks were pricking. I was broken at the wheel. My spirit groaned, my flesh was conquered, my soul cried out. I confessed—not through remorse, but through fear. I had lied through fear. I was truthful through fear.

These three episodes are my earliest recollections.

Conspicuous in my memory are the incidents in a fashionable school, which I attended for several years. I suggested to the class of some thirty girls that we should form ourselves into a secret society. The very name had an enticing sound. It breathed exclusiveness, and all children are natural born snobs. I proceeded to elect myself both president and treasurer. A name had to be chosen and a pin designed. I decided that the initials A. B. S. would look well interlaced, but what would those letters mean? Presto—I had it! “Asses Bray Shockingly.” This interpretation, born of the moment, proved satisfactory to my class-mates. I had seen to it that the selection and ordering of the pin was to be my affair. The price was agreed upon. The pins were to cost twenty-five cents each. I recalled a little shop in the Bowery which supplied flags, banners and emblems. There I struck my bargain. The pins were to be made of real, shiny tin, so that they might

suggest silver. The cost was to be eleven cents each. Therefore, on this transaction, I cleaned up the net sum of four dollars and twenty cents, representing the value of my idea. I had something to sell and I sold it.

The next story deals with an annual prize offered to the scholar who could recite with proper effect a long poem by some distinguished author. I selected Gray's *Elegy*. As nothing was more difficult for me than to memorise, I had to struggle to master the self-imposed task. At last I knew the lines, and knew them so thoroughly that for three consecutive years I recited the poem with stupendous success, carrying off the prize each time—the repetition remaining undetected. But at the fourth contest I met my Waterloo. The teacher remembered !

In connection with my own school days, let me observe that I do not believe there is a greater fallacy than the belief that one's social standing is improved or cemented by the associates found in a classroom. School friends are invariably dead friends in an incredibly short period after graduation. Rarely in after-life does one meet them, nor does, as a rule, the phrase "I used to go to school with you," strike any responsive chord. School-mates are not ships that pass in the night, but little skiffs which are generally engulfed by the fifty-thousand-ton liners of after life. Besides, very few women, as they grow older, like to face that ruthless reminder of the passing years.

When I graduated, I was destined to restrain my early evil tendencies, and to become a respectable member of society. My early mental training had been remarkable, for before I was seven, my father was teaching me the first Latin Grammar and directing my literary taste, so that I was reading daily and having expounded to me the *Odes* of Horace, pages of Dr. Johnson, Tasso, Kant's "*Critique of Reason*," Jeremy Taylor's "*Living and Dying*," Plutarch, the Greek drama, Shakespeare, and a score of other classics, the very titles of which are unknown to most of the youth of to-day.

At ten years of age, I gave an illustrated lecture on the

Solar System, with a lantern and slides belonging to my father. The room was crowded with expectant children, who had been mulcted of five cents each to listen to me. All went well, until suddenly there was a strong odour of burning wood. In order to see the pages from which I was reading (my older sister having been coaxed to manipulate the slides, without compensation), I had set a lighted candle in my mother's china-cupboard. As the shelves were fairly close together, the origin of the fire was readily explained. The lecture came to an untimely end, but I have no recollection of returning the money at the door.

I will omit the many other influences and incidents tending to my business development until I come to my first real venture, which had to do with the raising of chickens. Incubators were a new invention, but they seemed to solve my temporary problem.

I was about twenty-five years of age, and lived with my family in a comfortable, old-fashioned house in Irving Place, occupying a small hall-bedroom in the third story. There was ample space in it, so the incubator was bought, and set up at the foot of my bed. This was in the month of February—I was a passionate admirer of John Ruskin, and I can remember perfectly regulating the temperature of the eggs, while devouring at the same time the pages of "Sesame and Lilies."

I had grown tired of doing nothing. I began to realise that the world was divided into three groups—wasters, molluscs, and builders. I made my decision early. I would not belong to either of the first two classes. I had danced and played long enough. I had the germ of independence in my system. Besides, my father, like thousands of others, had caught the get-rich-quick microbe. I wanted to have my own life-saver, in case of financial disaster, so I thought that an anchor to windward would be advisable—in other words, an individual bank-account.

Like the hayseed who first plays poker, my beginning was a glorious success. From one hundred eggs, eighty-seven

chicks pecked their way into life. When old enough, they were carefully transported to Long Island, where we had an old-fashioned manor-house and farm. There I had my brooder ready to receive them. Not one died on the way. My venture prospered, and soon, on borrowed money which I eventually paid back, I built elaborate yards, and in the course of due time was proud owner of what, in those days, was a large poultry plant.

I became an exhibitor at the shows, and on one occasion, after making thirteen entries, took nine Firsts and Specials. It was a great moment, but incidentally it bred romance as well as chickens. A few days after the show closed, I received an offer of marriage from a rival breeder in Connecticut. He was a widower of forty and a well-known professional. Attracted, I presume, by my success, and remarking that I was, judging from my appearance, a healthy young woman, he with a keen business sense decided that I would make a practical helpmeet for him. Like many another girl over-confident of her charm, I thought I could marry whenever the spirit seized me, so I turned down this very substantial offer. More fool I! It was the last that ever came my way. I never drive through that particular town in Connecticut that I do not think that I was served jolly well right for my conceit. I might have been a happy old grandmother by this time, had I not been so cock-sure of myself.

CHAPTER II

IF, having read thus far, you feel any interest in my ancestry, let me state that I was born in New York City in 1856, and was the youngest of five children. We came from a long line of lawyers, with an occasional doctor thrown in to balance the mental with the physical. My maternal grandfather, a Quaker, was Vice-Chancellor William T. McCoun, a resident of Warren Street, and a page out of old New York. How often he described being taken, when he was a lad of seven dressed in a little velvet suit with lace frills at his throat and sleeves, with knee-breeches, silk-stockings, paste-buckled shoes and a cocked hat, to meet General Washington ! My maternal grandmother was a very handsome woman of Huguenot parentage. She was on the reception committee of the ball given to the Marquis of Lafayette, who evidently cherished a memory of her because he sent her back from France, as a souvenir, a gold needle-case, which is still in my possession.

My grandfather knew the founder of the Astor family, John Jacob, who dealt in skins as well as in real estate, and I have often heard the story of the way in which he traded. The skins were placed along the high shelves, with the tails of the animals carefully brushed, and hanging conspicuously over the edges. When the trader came into the little shop, which was ill lighted, he was invited to look over the stock, but his actual choice had to be made from the tails, for no skin was ever taken down until purchased. As frequently inferior skins had very bushy tails, Astor was thus enabled to unload much of his least desirable merchandise.

Cornelius Vanderbilt the first was also well known to the

citizens of those days. He did a thriving business by peddling in his boat cargoes of water-melons, then a great delicacy, between New York City, Staten Island and Albany. This perishable freight, however, was handled with such skill that little of it rotted on the way. Cornelius Vanderbilt was thus the pioneer in the fruit trade.

Once I was taken by my Grandfather McCoun to the old Meeting House, which was at Locust Valley, L.I. The occasion was the funeral of one of his many Quaker cousins. The service was conducted in absolute silence, which lasted an hour, and which was a terrible strain upon my active little person. As we filed out, the female relatives, who were dressed most carefully in delicate shades of grey and fawn-coloured silks, with immaculate white kerchiefs and becoming poke bonnets, exchanged condolences regarding the deceased "sister"—when suddenly one of the ladies leaned forward, took a fold of her friend's dress between her fingers and exclaimed: "Dear Phoebe, thy dress is made of a beautiful quality, where did thee find it?"

I had always been told that Quakers knew nothing of vanity, of vainglory or of worldliness; from that time on my belief in them was shattered.

Long Island was in those days unknown to millionaires. It was peopled by good, substantial folk, chiefly farmers and village store-keepers. The railroads were still embryonic. Glen Cove was the boat-landing for Oyster Bay, and when we children were taken annually to pay grandfather a visit, he invariably met us with a team of his big horses harnessed to one of his farm wagons, for when he retired from active law practice, he became a gentleman-farmer. His live stock was my delight, and I remember how I trudged joyfully with him over every acre of his property, growing daily more and more familiar with the complexities of crops and fruit-trees.

It was not until years later, after my mother had inherited the Oyster Bay homestead, that the tide of fashionable summer residents began to flow in our direction. It is almost needless

to state that when the old house came into our hands, an architect of the worst period, and of the most vicious tendencies, was employed to "do it over." He promptly destroyed every bit of the colonial landmark and erected instead a hideous modern structure, with jazzed roof and meaningless excrescences, in which our family lived until the death of my parents.

It was in Oyster Bay that I first knew Theodore Roosevelt, and it was he who inspired me to raise English mastiffs. It was fortunate that the Bull Moose had not been domesticated. At that time, he was entering upon his political career in the State Assembly. He used to ride a regular Fenimore Cooper gentle Narragansett, with a Mexican, large-stirrured saddle. On our barn was a hitching-ring, to which visitors tied their horses.

My young neighbour Theodore found that I made a good try-out for his speeches, but in the end I proved a keen disappointment. One evening, he appeared with a bulging manuscript in his pocket, a speech he was to deliver the following night in the Jamaica Town Hall. It was pretty long and fairly dull. I fell asleep, and when he turned to me, eager for comment, I was dead to the world and to him. In after years we often referred to this incident, which he magnanimously forgave.

Two stories which always struck me as very characteristic of Roosevelt might properly be told here.

When his five children were all very young, he used to take them, even in the coldest weather, to the dock in front of Sagamore, his country place. There he would line them up, shivering and shaking in their bathing suits. Suddenly, in a voice of thunder, he would cry out "Dive," at which command the youngsters all leaped into the water, not daring to disobey.

Roosevelt's tone of authority on these occasions was the same which he used at San Juan Hill, in fact throughout his life. Roosevelt was metaphorically insistent that those around him should "dive" if they wanted to make good in his eyes.

In those old Long Island days hunting became a popular

sport, and whether the trails were for aniseed or foxes, the fun was the same. Theodore Roosevelt was rarely absent from a meet. He rode hard, as he did everything else that came his way. He always wore his glasses, which at times were his torment, especially when heading for a stiff fence. On one occasion I was near him when he had a terrible cropper. He scrambled to his feet ; the glasses had disappeared. Stroking his horse's neck he remarked : " This is the time, old chap, when I will have to trust to another fellow's eyes."

CHAPTER III

MY father, Francis F. Marbury, was a remarkable man. He was one of the original members of the Century Club, where he is still referred to as a wonderful conversationalist and ready wit ; many are the stories attributed to him. On one occasion an eminent English jurist was a guest of honour, and after dinner remarked that he had observed that our country knew nothing about entails, to which my father replied : " That may be so, but we know everything about cocktails."

He was born in Maryland, on the shores of the Potomac, but when a little lad his parents removed to Alexandria, Virginia. There he lived until, at thirteen years of age, he entered Amherst College. One of his humorous anecdotes connected with his collegiate days was that at fourteen he had the measles and was cared for by a spinster of fifty, whose business it was to act as matron to the boys and who nursed them when ill. My father, whose allowance was very modest, was amazed at the amount of this lady's bill when presented. Asking timidly for an explanation, this venerable dame said that of course she had been obliged to add ten dollars to the account as compensation for the damage to her character, which, as an unmarried woman, was involved in her attending the sick-bed of a young man.

This was my poor father's first and last personal experience with a blackmailer.

After graduating from Amherst, he taught in the High School at Hudson, where he earned and saved enough to enable him to remove to New York and continue his law studies until

such time as he could pass his Bar examination. He soon entered my grandfather's law office, with the ultimate result that he became his son-in-law. My father's cousin, by the way, was the great forensic luminary of the District of Columbia, who won fame and place in history in the historical case of "*Marbury versus Madison*."

Father's memory was prodigious. He was an omniverous reader, and could easily recall and correctly quote seventy-five per cent. of what he read. None of his children, I may add, inherited his gift.

He was emotional and temperamental, which qualities, added to his logical brain, made a most interesting combination, although his absent-mindedness at times threatened disaster. On one occasion he was taking my two small brothers, aged six and eight respectively, to visit an old friend in Rochester. In those days one had to make the connection at Utica. My father led the little boys to a bench in the waiting-room, bidding them not to budge until his return. He became absorbed in a new book which he had purchased, when suddenly, hearing his train announced, he rushed to board it, leaving my brothers where he had seated them. When he remembered their existence, it was too late, but fortunately the station-master was a kind man, who took care of them until they could be forwarded to their destination.

I well recall his political activities. He was a staunch member of the Tammany Hall organisation, as were his friends Samuel Tilden, Abram S. Hewitt and a score of other citizens of high standing. The name of Thomas Jefferson was a household word.

My mother was a direct contrast to my father. She was slight, and the quintessence of gentleness and refinement. I never recall her raising her voice. She was exquisitely neat in her dress, and had infinite method in the regulation of her household. She was firm in her authority, however, and while we could always coax and wheedle my father, we knew instinctively that my mother's word was law.

She had all of the graces of life. Her education, after the fashion of that day, included languages, music and botany. Personally, she seemed to me like a piece of delicate porcelain, so that frequently I restrained my boisterous and hoydenish ways and my love of emphatic argument, for fear that I might cause her to break, and to dissolve like powder. Her very fragility became my most potent influence for law and order.

It was my mother who instilled into me the mysteries of housekeeping, and it was through her that I learned the intricacies of purchasing, preparing and presenting food. Until this day I enjoy nothing more than going to market (which I always do myself) and of directing my household. Thrift and economy were my guiding stars, waste and extravagance were deplored and avoided. Culinary magazines and cook-books were then unknown. Receipts, like historical traditions, were passed down through a long line of ancestry.

In looking back, I think that my mother's precepts sank deeper in my mind than even my father's brilliant witticisms. For instance, once when I expressed a desire to give an elaborate party, quite out of scale with our usual modest expenditures, my mother remarked : " Why sacrifice a year's hospitality for one evening's entertainment ? "

On another occasion I queried inviting some friends to a family meal, fearing that our table might be too crowded. " Ah, daughter," said mother, " where there is room in the heart, there is always room on the hearth."

There is another incident I recall which, when I was ten years old, gave me my first lesson in the relations of employers and employees.

We had a buxom young Irish girl named Mary, who was our general housemaid. One day I took exception at her indifference to some childish request of mine. Finding her callous and stubborn, I waxed indignant, showered some ugly abuse upon her defenceless head, and finally gave her a good pounding with my fists. My mother witnessed the scene, and forthwith marched me to her room, where, taking me on her lap,

she gently explained the one-sided game I had played ; for I had attacked and insulted someone who, in the position of our employee, could neither retaliate nor protect herself. She was forced to endure in silence. In other words, my mother plainly showed me that I had acted like a vulgar and brutal little bully. I was dissolved in tears, and with a truly contrite heart, sought Mary and humbly apologised for my misconduct ; thus learning a lesson which was never forgotten. All through my life I have endeavoured not to be rude, intolerant nor inconsiderate, where an inferior was concerned, and when I have erred I have had the grace to express my sincere regret while asking forgiveness for my overbearance, injustice and impatience.

It was amid such home influence that I grew from baby days to childhood. The first four years were passed before a screen of sunshine and happiness, when suddenly everything became dislocated, even to my infant mind. This was in the fatal year of 1860. Hatred replaced love. War drove out peace. It was then, for the first time, that I felt the shadow of racial prejudice, of fraternal differences, of freedom as against slavery, of tolerance as opposed to bigotry. I began to realise that revenge and disaster went hand in hand.

I recall the breaking out of the Civil War, its episodes and its ending ; the assassination of Lincoln and his funeral. It was early morning when the news reached us from Washington that our great President had been shot. Our household, like thousands of others, vibrated with horror at this fateful deed. As I stood listening to the details of the crime I had but one thought—that with the death of Lincoln, the awful rebels about whom I had been hearing for three years would surely pour into New York and kill us, each and every one. How could I escape ? I suddenly remembered that we had a roomy cedar closet which was only opened occasionally. Into this I went, carefully closing the door. I sat on a trunk, shivering with fright, and waiting.

By and by, I heard my name being anxiously called. I kept

silent. Hour after hour passed. I heard my mother's anxious sobs, my father's determination to ask aid from the police.

Then everything became hazy. I felt the earth slipping, and tried the door, but in the meanwhile it had been locked from without. With my fast ebbing childish strength I pounded on it. The door was opened and I fell, in a faint, into the hall.

Is it any wonder that the Assassination of Lincoln imprinted itself indelibly upon my memory ?



August Edouart, 1839.

FRANCIS FERDINAND MARBURY
(*Father of Elisabeth Marbury*)



ELIZABETH MCCOUN MARBURY
(*Mother of Elisabeth Marbury*)

CHAPTER IV

THERE were some very hospitable houses in old New York, where one could meet artists, actors, singers and men of letters. Society in those days was much smaller, and informal gatherings were the rule rather than the exception. On Fourth Avenue, running from Eighteenth to Nineteenth Street, were three very quaint dwellings which stood back from the street. In one of these lived Professor and Mrs. Ogden Doremus, with their children. It was here that I met Christine Nilsson, who made her first bow to our public at the old Academy of Music. She stopped at the Clarendon Hotel, then the best in the city. It was on the south-east corner of Fourth Avenue and Eighteenth Street. Clara Louise Kellogg and her mother always had their apartment there, and no foreigner of any prominence thought of going elsewhere. It was owned and run by a man named Charles Kerner, who had, as I recall, a very pretty wife. He was a pioneer in hotel-keeping, and was especially expert in the selection and preparation of food. Even when Mr. Kerner was in affluent circumstances, he never delegated the practical duties of a steward to any subordinate, for every morning, at five o'clock, he made his visits to the lower markets. This fact may explain the great popularity of the Clarendon.

Christine Nilsson's rooms faced on Eighteenth Street. She became the idol of the city, especially among schoolgirls. I remember my first visit to her. I was very young and very nervous, so that at the graciousness of her greeting I became self-conscious to such a degree that I could only mumble and withdraw. Afterwards, when I grew more accustomed to

celebrities, she and I became great friends, and I saw her frequently, both here and abroad.

Nilsson was a phenomenally strong woman. She was a great walker. I can recall her, dressed in coarse tweed, with stout boots, trudging through the streets, in the heaviest snow-storms. She never took any special precautions to protect her throat.

I often joined her in these promenades, and delighted in her reminiscences of the farm in Sweden where she was raised, of the discovery that she had a voice worth training, and of her subsequent struggles, heartaches and disappointments, until she scored her first triumph in the Théâtre Lyrique, in Paris.

Her marriage to Auguste Rouzaud, a Frenchman, she invariably referred to as "a luxury to which I treated myself."

The last time I met Christine Nilsson was at the gambling table in Monte Carlo. Like many women when they grow older, she found much solace in this nerve-racking pastime.

She was a great artist, especially in certain rôles. I doubt whether anyone ever surpassed her in "Faust" or "Mignon."

Another delightful house was the Richard Watson Gilders'. They had converted a stable into a dwelling, and many were the pleasant evenings spent under their roof.

The Laurence Hutton's was noted for its hospitality and its death masks, for Hutton had made a wonderful collection of the latter. It was there that I first saw Laurence Oliphant, the dreamer, the man of vision, the man who had practised self-abnegation so that one believed he had looked into the face of God.

And Robert Louis Stevenson! What shall I say of him, who created a literary era while drifting through Southern Seas and while visiting tropical islands hitherto almost unknown! His inspired tribute to that saintly priest, Father Damien, whose life was ultimately sacrificed in the tender care of the poor lepers, to whom he had been a ministering angel, was a twice-told tale. Like all great records, it was the story of a life well lived and simply lost.

It was at the home of Miss Emily Butler that I met Matthew Arnold the poet, his wife and his daughter Lucy. We had all loved "Tom Brown's Schooldays" Hughes' immortal tribute to Dr. Arnold of Rugby, who was the father of Matthew Arnold. The latter had come to our country to give an extended course of lectures, and so great was his personal popularity that it was said of him that from the day of his landing until he sailed, he was never allowed to pay an hotel bill. While he travelled, his daughter remained in the city. She and I grew to be close friends. She eventually married an American, Frederick W. Whitridge, which rejoiced her many admirers—for she had inherited her brilliant father's talent of attracting them.

How long ago it all seems, but the society of early New York would be a blank without a passing reference, at least, to these real "salons." In those days there were no millionaires with palaces in which period furniture, eighteenth-century paintings and powdered flunkies were supposed to compensate for an absence of real people with real brains.

In the modern drawing-room, celebrities are often regarded as seven-headed cows, to be advertised in advance, and to be stared at upon arrival.

Hostesses used to create their own atmosphere. They did not depend upon professional decorators. They gave as well as did their guests. They were not crushed by the weight of their magnificence. They were adequate and articulate in themselves. There was no suggestion of that mental vacuum which undigested wealth generally fails to fill.

About this time I was given the opportunity of meeting Emma Lazarus, the poetess. She was one of a large family well known and respected in this city.

Emma had a rare literary talent which received recognition both here and in England. I must confess, however, that I was much more attracted by the character of the woman than by the genius of the writer. She was the first Jewess I had ever really known, and one must admit that my introduction

to this great race was made under remarkable guidance. Her ideals were sublime, and her loyalty to her people was very beautiful to contemplate. She had studied their history reverently and was entirely familiar with their literature. I was her junior in years, which gave me the privilege of sitting at her feet.

I can truly state that I owe to this friend my first impetus toward the higher things of life. To be with Emma Lazarus produced a stained-glass effect upon one's soul. Her tastes were of the simplest description, for despite the fact that she lived in a house of luxury, her own room was sparsely furnished. The walls were white, and a plain iron bedstead was her chosen place of rest. She claimed that she preferred this severe environment on account of her work. I was inclined to appaud her wisdom.

It is no wonder that I thus acquired a respect and a love for the Jews which otherwise I might have been denied. Through Emma Lazarus, I understood the beauty and simplicity of Ruth standing breast high amid the corn; and Rebecca at the Well was revealed to me as a woman full of the poetry and the pathos of her people.

My early splendid impressions of the Jews was cemented when later I met Israel Zangwill. I saw him frequently both here and in England, and watched with sympathy his efforts in behalf of his race. This was his life's work, and never once during all the disheartening years has Israel Zangwill ever turned back. He and Emma Lazarus are the representatives of the chosen people who could have led me with enthusiasm to the very shores of the "Red Sea."

CHAPTER V

As I have crossed the ocean some seventy times between the ages of sixteen and sixty-seven, it might now be advisable to refer to my first trip. I went abroad with a school friend, some college boys and several elderly chaperons. We were fourteen days from New York to Liverpool, and I experienced all the novelty of sea-sickness, followed by the hilarity born of recovery. We "did" the British Isles, Switzerland, the Rhine, Belgium and France. This was directly after the Franco-Prussian War. My whole memory of this trip centres around Paris as I then saw it for the first time. The Commune was barely over. Ruined streets and destroyed buildings were on every side. The Vendôme Column had been wrecked by the Revolutionists and lay broken towards the Rue de la Paix. The Rue Royale was swept clear of buildings as far as the Church of the Madeleine. The Hôtel de Ville on the opposite bank of the Seine was picturesque with its open arches made by the shattered windows. The Bois de Boulogne was practically devoid of trees, as they had been cut down to provide barriers during the siege. The Palace of the Tuileries was in ruin, and outside of Paris, the Palace of St. Cloud was still smoking.

Everywhere and in all directions one realised the tragedy of War and the terror of Revolution.

It took many subsequent visits before I could visualise Paris as a city of sunshine and laughter, for my first introduction to it had been through this echo of tears and of suffering.

The Palace of Versailles seemed even then to be smarting from the deliberate insult planned through the crowning of the

victorious German Emperor in its great gallery of mirrors. The German officers, by the way, were stationed in one of the oldest hotels in Versailles, and it took many years before the inhabitants forgave the proprietors for selling its renowned wines to their foes. But these gentlemen argued in their defence that they were really doing a very patriotic thing when they forced the enemy to pay the top price for these products of French vineyards.

My first introduction to black bread was at this time, because it was many months before even the tourists could buy anything made of white flour. Yet in those days, as now, the American dollar had a large purchasing power.

The Prince Imperial was alluring to my imagination. We were practically the same age. I never wearied of the many anecdotes told of his boyhood days, of his easy-going father, Napoleon III, and of his frivolous and selfish mother, the Empress Eugénie. Stories illustrative of her superstitions were frequent. I recall that during the war she received many blessed statues of the Virgin which were sent to her as votive offerings from different villages in Spain. Each in turn was placed in the niche of prominence in the Palace and visited as a shrine by Her Imperial Majesty and the ladies of the Court. But when news of a fresh disaster was reported, that particular statue was removed and replaced by one which had more recently arrived.

When, in later years, the Prince Imperial lost his life, sacrificed in a measure to the Empress' parsimony, I remember how deeply I was impressed by the headline in the *New York Herald* announcing his tragic ending. It read, "Shot dead in the tangled grass of Africa."

Years afterwards Victorien Sardou, the great dramatist and my friend of whom later I shall write at length, told me many stories about the reign of Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie. Before she made the brilliant marriage which placed her upon the Throne of France, she lived at No. 12 Place Vendôme with her mother, the Comtesse de Montijo, and with

her sister, afterwards the Duchesse d'Albe. Here all of the gifted young authors, men of fashion and statesmen were constant visitors. These ladies, after the Spanish fashion, smoked incessantly. Sardou said that as you entered the floor on the street and mounted the stairs you could smell the tobacco, and that the rooms were invariably filled with a cloud of smoke. Years afterwards he was summoned to the Palace at Compiègne to give a Court performance of his then famous comedy, "Nos Bons Villageois." At the rehearsal, at which an Intendant of the Royal Household was present, when one of the actors proceeded to light a cigarette, this gentleman informed Sardou that this must be cut out. Asking for an explanation of such an arbitrary ruling, the Intendant said that Her Imperial Highness especially objected to tobacco, and that even the sight of anyone smoking was distasteful to her.

When the Tuileries was sacked, Sardou, who was an ardent young patriot, rushed through the empty corridors and endless suites of rooms until he found himself in the private apartment of the Empress, practically as she had left it. Evidences of her hasty flight were everywhere. Following the very natural impulse of taking away some souvenir of her occupancy, he grabbed the first thing at hand, which, when he afterwards examined it, turned out to be a very intimate article of toilet.

While at the Hôtel Bristol in Paris a trivial incident connected with my first visit deals with our Italian courier name's Fantappi and a very prim English maid named Smithers, whom we had picked up in London. Desiring to make himself agreeable, Fantappi offered to show Smithers the art treasures in the Louvre. They sallied forth for the whole of a Sunday afternoon. Imagine our surprise when, within two hours, Smithers returned with flashing eyes and flaming cheeks. When asked the cause of her ill-suppressed excitement, she exclaimed, "I always heard, madame, that those Italians had dirty minds, but would you believe it, the whole reason that vile man took me out was to drag me into a building and

through dark passages just to show me a lot of men and women with not a stitch of clothing on them. There the shameless creatures stood with nothing to cover them. I was that mortified, I didn't know where to look, and all the time that low Italian was explaining in his broken gibberish that they were art treasures that had been dug up. The only thing I said to him was that they had better have been left buried for the decency of the world ! I am sure madame agrees with me ! ”

This same Fantappi evidently thought that American tourists were congenital idiots, for he never failed to exclaim when leaving an hotel, “ This is the street,” or when arriving at the sea coast, to say, “ This is the sea.”

However, like many others in those days who were new to foreign travel, we imagined that couriers were a necessary evil and that attending to railway tickets was merely an incidental part of their duty ; their real business being to protect travellers from bandits and highwaymen. When I think of those long carriage drives in Switzerland, climbing the mountain passes at a snail's pace, the brakes constantly in use, the tired horses resting with steaming flanks, the heat and the discomfort, the classical itinerary comprising Chamonix, the Mer de Glace and the rest, I feel that to tour Europe as part of one's early education was no light task. We were crammed with historical details which to this day I have never digested.

I recall my first Paris dress. It was of green camel's hair cloth, but made long. Never before had I had a frock below my boot-tops. When I put on the gown in question, I purposely walked in and out through a door that I opened and shut in order that I might revel in the novelty of lifting the train so that it should not be caught. After all, this was a very harmless amusement.

It was during this first trip abroad that I had my introduction to the great collections of art. I began to realise the woe-fulness of ignorance. Things of unimportance fell into their proper places.

I was inoculated with beauty, and my feet became shod

with a sense of its value, which sense I am happy to say has never left me.

I studied day and night. One interest followed another. Even though I was threatened with mental indigestion I never paused. I bought books, I collected photographs, I gathered souvenirs.

It was not a case of the great men I had known, but of the great men I intended to know.

I revelled in anticipation of the broad and inspiring life which I determined to make mine. I had eaten of the tree of knowledge. There would be no going back.

The art of etching was then in its infancy, and I became the proud owner of "Battersea Beach," by Francis Seymour Haden, and of "Le Stryge," by Charles Méryon, which I had picked up as bargains. These were among my most cherished purchases.

Looking back I am aware of the lack of method in this self-training. It was like a meal in which the courses were reversed, but there was time enough in which to tabulate, and the very spontaneity and enthusiasm of my wanderings may have quickened my imagination and may have spared me from an academic dullness of perception.

William Blake became a real person, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti an actuality. The golden staircase of Burne Jones was thronged with angels I knew, and I floated down the rivers of France with the Romance of the Rose as my guide-book. It was a wonderful awakening of the soul and of the mind of a young girl; but again I must pay tribute to my unusual father and to my gentle mother who had paved the way. Mine was a glorious inheritance; the inheritance of plain living and of high thinking.

CHAPTER VI

FOLLOWING my return to America after my first trip abroad, the next eight years of my life were chiefly experimental. I dashed into one absorption after another. Parties, balls, receptions and dinners came in natural order. On the other hand, I joined literary clubs ; I took up various welfare work ; I taught in the Sunday-school where, by the way, Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania was my pupil. I can see him now in a black velvet suit and red necktie. I wrote spasmodically for the magazines and newspapers. I became a polite philanderer revelling in the joy of living. My mind was kaleidoscopic.

I fished, shot, rode, drove and played tennis. I was considered by my contemporaries as an all-round good sport, but underneath this apparent aimlessness of purpose, I was steadily developing, because I had brains enough to feel a divine discontent and to know that there was something infinitely better awaiting me whenever I would stretch out my hand to take it.

Many of my friends expected me to marry young and well ; and when I never married at all, great was their astonishment. I will now tell the truth as to why I never married, and then the subject can be dismissed.

I can honestly say that I never had a really good offer. The best was but anæmic. I attracted all the lame ducks that were limping about, I was the lode-star of the weaklings ; the youths who trailed me were poor affairs as a rule, and to prove that my estimate of them was correct, not one in after life ever demonstrated any real value and never achieved any conspicuous accomplishment.

I was always in love from the time that I was ten years old until I was nearing the end of my first half century of existence, but invariably the quality of protection was the dominant note of my affection. I built many of my heroes out of straw, in fact this was my proverbial habit, endowing them with unrealities, while blinding myself to their realities, of which sophistry, poor dears, they were sublimely unconscious.

Probably the longest lived in my memory was a fascinating gentleman, Byronic and Saturnic in appearance, for whom I cherished a hopeless passion for four years. I use the word hopeless because he had a perfectly good and healthy wife. As she was his generous provider and held the purse strings, he never, even when expressing the flattering assurance of his intense admiration for me, came within a thousand miles of suggesting a more compromising intimacy than that of a perfectly-restrained and well-ordered friendship. He was almost cynical in the correctness of his conduct. I fancy that I was Orange Juice to him ; healthful and refreshing. Nevertheless, this romantic attachment may have made me blind to possible matrimonial opportunities. Yet in the instances, during this period, when my rejected suitors transferred their affections elsewhere, they never seem to have contributed much but misery to the ladies of their ultimate choice, so I may have escaped a worse fate than that of single blessedness. Perhaps if I had had sense enough to have recognised a " real man " when I met him, who would have commanded and not pleaded, I might have responded to him and been a happy great-grand-mother even as I write.

To be quite honest, I firmly believe that every woman should marry if this is humanly possible for her. Her one indisputable field of usefulness is in the bearing and raising of children. This is the end for which God intended her. I wish that before any girl decides against matrimony on general principles, she would consult me before it is too late, because this is a subject upon which my advice would be of benefit, as I know what I have missed.

If a woman through her own conceit registers against marriage in favour of some problematical career she will find, provided she lives long enough, that all through life she is at best only a misfit. She may live creditably and even accomplish infinite good, her influence may be of great service to the world, she may help and heal, she may spread sunshine, she may exude happiness; nevertheless, she has missed the normal expression of all these things clamouring within her for utterance. Her natural territory is her home, even if it is a tiny flat. She should realise that the mothers of great men have contributed much to their making. If, on the other hand, the bearing of children has legitimately been denied her, then she can prove herself a real helpmeet to her husband, and if she is more richly endowed in vision and in capacity than he, she can encourage and mother him and be the silent influence making a good man better or a bad man less evil.

New Year's Day in old New York was socially observed. It was kept in an orthodox fashion. The ladies of the family were dressed and in their drawing-rooms as early as ten o'clock in the morning, ready for their visitors. On the dining-room table a collation was set out consisting of cold ham, boned turkey, jellies, sandwiches, punch, and pickled oysters. The latter were very popular. Then the callers began to stream in. A careful count was kept of the number so that for days following we girls would compare notes, and if any one bell had rung the oftenest in the neighbourhood, the fact was proudly proclaimed by that triumphant hostess. As the distances grew greater in the city, the character of New Year's Day necessarily changed, until baskets were fastened on the doors, into which cards would be dropped. In due time this habit almost became obsolete, until now bridge, Mah-Jong, matinées and movies have replaced these old-fashioned customs.

There was a solidity about the great houses of that time which was certainly early Victorian. Mahogany doors and American Colonial furniture were a hall-mark of gentility. No one has better portrayed the spirit of this era than Edith

Wharton in her delightful novel, "The Age of Innocence." That Mrs. Wharton (who had been born a Jones) became a successful writer caused no wonderment to those who knew her as a girl. She was never satisfied with anything but the best. Her taste was indisputable. She agreed with Buffon that style in literature made the man, and incidentally the woman. She would either learn to write well or she wouldn't write at all. She sought masters of pure English. She worked incessantly and was her own severest critic. Those who think that success in the world of letters comes easily should realise that an infinite capacity of taking pains is at the root of such accomplishment. The trouble to-day is that everyone thinks he or she can write, while very few know that they cannot. "Ethan Frome," by Edith Wharton, is a classic which ranks with the very best fiction which American literature has produced.

It was in those days of long ago that I met her. I believe it was Henry James who first recognised and encouraged her talent. He was one of a group of brilliant young men familiar in New York society. Others were Allen Thorndike Rice, who was the proprietor, for a while, of the *North American Review*; Edmund Randolph Robinson, that handsome lawyer from Philadelphia; Stanford White, the architect, whose presence made the success of any dinner table. I had many talks with Henry James, who always longed to write for the stage. I think that perhaps one of his bitterest disappointments in life was due to his failure as a playwright. He never could grasp the safe receipt, that plays must act first and talk afterwards.

One of the most agreeable houses was that of S. L. M. Barlow, which stood on the north-east corner of Twenty-third Street and Madison Avenue. It was a landmark for many years and a Mecca to all strangers of note who visited New York. The Barlows were great dog lovers, and their canine friends were just as much part of the household as were the humans. The Hon. Roscoe Conkling, then at the height of his political career,

was a frequent guest. I remember when sitting next to him one evening that I referred with admiration to E. L. Godkin, who was for many years the editor of the *New York Evening Post*. Mr. Conkling listened with tolerance to my girlish enthusiasm and then dryly remarked: "Godkin is all right. He studied law in my office—I always found that he could think on the spur of a *month*!"

Another recognised hostess was Mrs. William Waldorf Astor, whose house was on the south-west corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fourth Street. Her entertainments could hardly be called hilarious. They were temperate in their joy-giving quality. On one occasion when the champagne was served it was found to be "corked," but instead of sending it away, Mrs. Astor said that she preferred it corked because it reminded her of white wine.

- Several years afterwards Elsie de Wolfe and I crossed the ocean on the French steamship *La Gascogne*. We were at the captain's table together with the members of the Panama Commission and Mrs. Astor. The latter was placed on the right of Captain Santelli, and as we sat down on the second night out, her servant brought a dust-covered bottle which Mrs. Astor put in front of her, asking at the same time for a small liqueur glass, while remarking that the wine was old Toquay, costing forty dollars a bottle. When the steward brought the tiny glass she filled it and offered it to the captain, who, in voluble French, insisted that he did not wish to rob her of such a priceless beverage. The next night, however, the old lady called for a large glass, which she filled and passed to the captain. Overcome by this increasing generosity, he was visibly embarrassed, when Mrs. Astor put him wholly at his ease by saying: I beg of you to drink it. I find that it gives me a severe headache."

These were the days when Mr. Ward McAllister rendered social New York a great service. He took the most infinite amount of trouble in organising and directing the subscription balls such as the Patriarchs and the Assembly, not to

speak of the public entertainments for charity. He was invariably kind and courteous, and many a *débutante* felt grateful to him for seeing that she was provided with partners. In those days Delmonico's, on Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, was the fashionable resort; afterwards the tide followed this same popular restaurant to Twenty-sixth Street and Fifth Avenue, then everything swept northward until Sherry's, on the corner of Forty-fourth Street, became the centre.

The everyday whirl of that time was as unlike the present as it is possible to imagine. Sleighs in New York City are no longer seen, whereas then they were familiar objects. How beautiful some of them were, to be sure! I recall the excitement when one of the most dashing young men we knew drove up to our door with a Brewster sleigh drawn by three horses abreast in leopard-skin collars and harness *à la Russe*. This was certainly sensational enough to have been the legitimate forerunner of the *Chauve Souris*. Jerome Park, as the terminal of coaching parties and of straw rides, was very popular.

Everyone seemed to know everyone else. One of the old houses still remains as a landmark, not only in brick and mortar, but in its hospitality, which has changed but little in its character since those early days. I am speaking of the Hewitts, at 9, Lexington Avenue.

Abram S. Hewitt was always in active Democratic politics. He was a member of Congress from 1874 to 1878, and from 1880 to 1886, after which he was elected mayor of this city. During his administrations New York was honoured by the visit of Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii. The mayor appointed his daughters and myself as her escort, to introduce her to the things of interest which she might enjoy seeing.

We arranged that she should visit the Vanderbilt private gallery of paintings which was then unique. When we arrived, Her Royal Highness passed listlessly from one picture to another. We handed her one of the large magnifying glasses. This seemed to amuse her while she held it forward, then drew

it back with gusto. However, the climax of her delight was reached when, in passing out, she saw for the first time a dumb-waiter in operation. Not once, but over and over again she insisted upon having it run up and down, clapping her hands gleefully and urging her Prime Minister, who was also her interpreter, to see to it at once that similar dumbwaiters were installed throughout her Royal Palaces.

At the large reception given her by the mayor she appeared in a robe made of the yellow plumage of the Oo birds, which only Royalty had the privilege of wearing.

There were five children in the Hewitt family, with whom I literally grew up, and much of my youthful enjoyment I owed to these good friends.

Then the delightful musicales given by May Callender and Caro de Forest—who can forget the graciousness of these hostesses, or the informality of the evenings when great artists provided an enjoyment only equalled by the generous hospitality which was so genially dispensed?

Nevertheless, and despite such cases as I have described, there were quite as many snobs then as now, and I can recall the careful combing of lists and the rejection of names on the plea of exclusiveness. I wonder that the leaders of the seventies and eighties do not turn in their graves when they read the society columns in our contemporary Press and note the present importance of the descendants of those who in their day were cruelly snubbed and ignored. I have always maintained that to climb socially is legitimate, provided that in the struggle the machinery does not creak too loudly. If I may be permitted, however, to offer a little advice to those who are striving for this kind of recognition, let me say that nothing in the world is easier than to get within this inner circle of the so-called fashionable set, provided a little intelligence is displayed while making the effort. Here is the general receipt :

First, the oven must be hot with enthusiasm. No attention must be paid to dampers. The mixing of the ingredients must be done with infinite care. When ready to function,

cultivate on the quiet some few really nice people of assured position. Take a house that is not too large. Have a faultless cook and an imaginative and experienced butler. Give generously to charities, but not so lavishly as to become conspicuous. Do not begin with more than one motor-car. Invite only the few already well selected, and allow your visiting list to expand normally. Do not rent an opera box at first: subscribe for seats. Do not lease a house at Newport until you have substantial friends in the Berkshires and on Long Island. Above all, do not let any other woman discover that you are intelligent. Conceal this fact as a crime. Be well dressed, but never too well dressed. Wear small pearls and not large ones. Be deferential when advisable, while preserving always a dignified independence. Analyse and acquire a proper estimate of values. Do not hurry, and do not wax impatient if your social progress seems slow. If you are young, you can afford to wait. Above all, realise that you cannot indulge in ceremony. The richer your friends, the more they will cost you. There is no greater fallacy than to imagine that millionaires are profitable acquaintances. In my long and varied experience I have found them to be a very expensive luxury.

When a young girl, I had a friend whose income was forty thousand a year. It was always I who paid for *matinée* tickets, for cabs, for luncheons and for similar items. Once, in London, I was the daily companion of a multi-millionairess from a large Western city. We lunched, dined and went to the play. At the end of a week, I had to retire, as in the seven days I had spent one hundred and fifty dollars upon her entertainment. Believe me, it is far cheaper in the end to pay for your own taxis, your own meals and your own pleasures. The rich, as a rule, never acquire the habit of incidental spending. They donate libraries, found charities and endow churches, but the every-day items of life seem beneath their comprehension.

CHAPTER VII

WORLD fairs always roused my enthusiasm. I have personally enjoyed four of these official amusement parks, beginning with that of the Philadelphia Centennial, opened by President Grant in the year 1876. My father was then encouraging the attentions of a very substantial and serious young man from Boston, who was altogether a correct and desirable suitor. Therefore this admirer was invited to go to Philadelphia with us. I was reasoning with myself that I ought to respond to his wooing, as I was quite sensible enough to appreciate the assets he had to offer. He was extremely well off. Two trivial incidents, however, proved fatal to his courtship. We were passing an exhibit of heating appliances, and I was especially attracted by some Franklin stoves, built after the old models. My admiration of them was abruptly checked by my escort, who remarked that they didn't begin to heat the room as did the ugly, modern stove which stood well out ; in fact, he asserted that when he married he would allow no other kind than the latter in his house.

The second set-back had to do with furniture. I was particularly pleased with some that was upholstered in attractive material, when my friend insisted that horsehair covering was the only kind he would use, as it could be kept clean with little effort.

This finished him, and so I promptly informed my father that any further persuasion was useless.

My second trip abroad was with my father in 1880. We went directly to London and there took lodgings in Jermyn Street. James Russell Lowell was our ambassador at the time,

and William Hoppin the senior secretary. Both of these gentlemen were intimate friends of my father's, sharing with him, while smoking their after-dinner cigars, memories of Brook Farm, that experiment in fraternity, and of its habitués, such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and George William Curtis, about whom I heard many a story. Thanks to Mr. Lowell, we were invited to various agreeable functions. It was even proposed that I should be presented at Court, but oddly enough this held no attraction for me. Then, as all through my life, I escaped the lure of titles. I felt, with Emerson, that the only real aristocracy in the world was the aristocracy of brains; it was the opportunity of penetrating into the circle of such men as Charles Robert Darwin, John Tyndall, Thomas Henry Huxley and Herbert Spencer, of which I eagerly availed myself. They were my father's associates during this London visit. I absorbed from them.

A little anecdote in connection with Professor Huxley seems worth the telling.

We were at a large Sunday evening high tea at his house. Nearly everyone present enjoyed some distinction. After supper in the long twilight the young folks adjourned to the lawn to play croquet, the then popular game.

There was a Nonconformist church nearby. The singing was distinctly heard, as was the clicking of our croquet balls. In the midst of the fun a stern-looking individual appeared, stalked up to Professor Huxley, and said: "Sir, the rector and our congregation beg, that during the hours of service, you will refrain from disturbing us by making this most objectionable noise with the croquet balls."

To which Huxley loftily replied: "Sir, I and my guests beg, that during our enjoyment of my garden, that your rector and his congregation will refrain from disturbing us by making the very distressing noise caused by your singing."

Another anecdote is in order which relates to Herbert Spencer. One morning he came early to our lodgings and found me just leaving to visit the National Gallery—I was eager, full

of enthusiasm and tireless in my energy. Spencer, looking at me with a certain amount of weariness, asked why I devoted so much time to the old masters. In retort, I said that "it was doubtless because I realised that I was so young that age could teach me much." "That is all very well," answered Mr. Spencer, "but if you had ever studied anatomy, nothing in the world would seem to you more grotesque than the majority of these old paintings which we prize as national treasures. For instance, look at any one of the Holy Families and therein study the eyes of the Christ Child. You will note that those early painters invariably put eyes of adults into the heads of children, and that they were never accurate in their portrayal of anything which required a knowledge of anatomy."

For years afterwards these observations of Herbert Spencer disturbed me not a little. It was only when I grew to understand the souls of these old masters that I realised how much he had missed in merely dwelling upon those technical defects of which they had been guilty. His scientific mind had failed to grasp that "little more and how much it is," and "the little less," which, as Browning wrote, is "worlds away."

Spencer, like all that group of thinkers who were then considered unorthodox, rarely wandered into the by-ways of imagination. They had little sympathy with loose thinking in any direction. Herbert Spencer always impressed me as a highly-nervous man. I believe he was a victim of insomnia, which could readily account for this. In those days there was no Coué to teach people how to sleep; and auto-suggestion was still in its infancy.

John Tyndall, the physicist, was then sixty years of age. He was an Irishman, very gentle and very lovable. Possibly his constant visits to the high Alps, where he lived for months at a time, away from the incessant bustle of the world, may have contributed to his balance and poise. Charles Darwin was seventy-one years of age when I saw him. He was surrounded by those who worshipped at his feet. His theory of evolution had enlisted hundreds of followers. People who

believed at all in Darwin regarded him as the Columbus of the scientific world. Those whose intelligence failed to grasp the social economics of Spencer felt responsive to the teachings of Darwin which carried them in an unbroken ascent from an atom upward. There was something especially fascinating to the imaginative mind in his "Descent of Man." To trace one's scientific ancestry through centuries was educational and flattering, especially as humanity was thereby proven to be the best creation of a perfected system.

George Eliot I met but once. My father and I were taken to her house on one of her intimate afternoons. Her personality to me was rather austere and frightening. Her face was unattractive and angular, but redeemed in a great measure by her wonderful eyes.

Her book of essays, "The Impressions of Theophrastus Such," has just been published. Of course I had read, with infinite delight and a surprising appreciation for my age, everything from her pen. I was also familiar with "The Life of Goethe," by George Henry Lewes. Prior to the time of which I write there was a very large element in English society which refused either to visit or to receive George Eliot. Her liberal views were never entirely endorsed nor generally tolerated. The circumstances which determined her to live with Lewes as his wife, without the marriage ceremony, would seem less startling to-day than they were at that time. Her marriage to John Cross in May, 1880, while it brought her many new friends and gave her a security of position which she had never previously enjoyed, cost her many of her old admirers. To them, George Eliot strong and independent of view, George Eliot who through her sheer intellectual forcefulness had reached the pinnacle of literary fame, reigned supreme in their minds and far above the necessity of an alliance which seemed at best but a commonplace concession to public opinion; a sort of social aftermath which to them was colourless and unconvincing.

Thanks to our friend Mr. Hoppin, my father and I were

taken to visit the wonderful collection at Grosvenor House, the residence of the Duke of Westminster.

It was there that I saw Gainsborough's "Blue Boy" for the first time. It seemed so completely in its proper setting that I confess to a regret that it was ultimately sold, even though our own country has thereby benefited, as its home hereafter will be on the Pacific slope.

Another visit which I shall always remember was to the beautiful and impressive studio of Alma Tadema, then at the zenith of his popularity as a painter.

Upon entering his house, which was classical in conception and decoration, two willowy young girls, clad in clinging draperies which might have come from the looms of William Morris, rose to greet the visitors. They were the daughters of Tadema, and it would not have been surprising to run across them in one's travels, reclining upon marble benches or loitering in the Acropolis with baskets of luscious fruit upon their heads.

Over the wide doorway which led into the studio were these words: "As the Sun is to Flowers, so is Art to Life." This phrase savoured of such good symbolism that I have never forgotten it. It was in this same year of 1880 that the "professional beauty" became a recognised factor in London society. Conspicuous amongst these young conquerors were the lovely Georgina, Countess of Dudley; Lady Lonsdale, who afterward became the Marchioness of Ripon; Mrs. Cornwallis West, who had a distinction which was all her own; and the fragile and lovely Marchioness of Anglesey, an American girl who was Minna King of Georgia. However, the sensation of the London season was a young woman who had crept quietly into town from the Island of Jersey, protected by a husband, but having neither influential connections nor a substantial bank account. Her name was Lillie Langtry, referred to in the society column of the day as the Jersey Lily. I saw her for the first time at the Opera. She came in rather late, when immediately all eyes were turned in her direction. The stage



HON. WM. F. MCCOUN
(Maternal grandfather)



EMMA JACKSON MCCOUN
(Maternal grandmother)



JAMES HOLLAND
(Great-uncle)



ELIZA JACKSON HOLLAND
(Great-aunt)

was forgotten. She stood for a moment wondrously fair and symmetrically slim. Her gown was of black net with tulle sleeves. There was neither paint nor powder on her face. Her complexion was literally like roses, the softest shade of pink and white. Her arms were very beautiful, in fact as she stood there, the target of concentrated admiration, it seemed to me that I had never seen anyone before who was quite so lovely.

This impression lasted for several seasons, even when I became more accustomed to seeing her. She was the social star. No function of any importance was complete without her. She took precedence everywhere and, whether within the Royal enclosure at Ascot or on the Royal yacht at Cowes, it was Mrs. Langtry upon whom all eyes were turned; and it was Mrs. Langtry who was the rain and the sunshine of London drawing-rooms.

It was she who had Jersey cloth made into sports costumes, and I remember now how smart and trim she looked in them.

I first saw Henry Irving in 1880. My father took me to a performance of the "Lyons Mail." I enjoyed it vastly, but father, who admired good diction above all else, insisted that Irving's was beneath contempt, that his mannerism was unpardonable and his speech unintelligible. I was never, even in later years, able to change his opinion so far as Henry Irving was concerned.

Having tired of London we crossed to the continent, where we spent several months.

One story regarding that great patriot Gambetta deserves mention. We were walking along under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli when suddenly a smart little brougham dashed up to the curb. The man who alighted from it was Gambetta. I was moved by curiosity to step to the side of the carriage and to look in. Judge my surprise to see on the seat three articles: a new novel, a box of chocolates and a bunch of violets. No paper of state, no ministerial portfolio, no political review.

Were these three presents for three women or were they three presents for one woman ?

The above reminds me of the very witty remark attributed to the wife of Lieutenant Hobson, the hero of the Spanish-American War. After addressing a meeting in Chicago, so great was the enthusiasm that the lieutenant was forthwith kissed by three thousand women. When Mrs. Hobson was asked whether she objected to this, she replied : " Not in the very least ! I infinitely prefer to have my husband kissed by three thousand women than that he should be kissed three thousand times by one woman."

This, indeed, was a case of *Mrs.* Hobson's choice. How many, by the way, know the origin of this expression ? It seems that, in the eighteenth century, there was a livery stable keeper in Surrey named Hobson. His horses all stood in line. When a teamster or a traveller called for a post horse, Hobson's rule was that he should take the horse standing nearest to the stable door, hence the expression "Hobson's choice."

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER my return from abroad in 1885 I became actively interested in the theatre. The Lyceum was the playhouse to which all fashionable New York flocked. Daniel Frohman, formerly associated with the Madison Square Theatre, had decided to be at the head of his own company and in independent management.

His many years of subsequent success justified this self-confidence. He produced one good play after another, and it was wholly due to his encouragement that I became identified with plays and playwrights. I first met him in connection with a benefit performance I had arranged and was directing for a popular charity. This entertainment was so successful financially that we cleared nearly five thousand dollars from it. It was this result which influenced Mr. Frohman to believe that I possessed business qualities which might be developed. I listened eagerly to his advice, and not only listened, but had sense enough to follow it. Mrs. Francis Hodgson Burnett had placed her play, "Little Lord Fauntleroy," with Henry French, who was to produce it in the Broadway Theatre. I heard indirectly that Mrs. Burnett knew little about the stage, so it occurred to me that I might perhaps act as her business representative. A mutual friend gave me a letter of introduction to her, which I promptly presented.

I must have made a favourable impression, because Mrs. Burnett invited me then and there to attend a rehearsal. For a fortnight I never left her side. I was sincere in my enthusiasm for the play and in my admiration of its author. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" was produced and made an instantaneous hit.

There was a prospect of other companies being immediately organised, to cover the country, as in those days piracy was facilitated by our very lax inter-State laws. However, by this time Mrs. Burnett felt enough confidence in my intelligence and energy to give me the position I had craved.

She lived in Washington with her husband, who was a well-known oculist, and her two sons, Lionel and Vivian. Every week I spent Saturday and Sunday in her charming home, and rarely allowed anything to interfere with my making my report to her with regularity. I remember on one occasion, while suffering from an attack of tonsilitis, and with a temperature of one hundred and one, that I still persisted in keeping to my schedule.

For several years I was in the closest relations with Mrs. Burnett, making all of her play contracts, collecting her royalties and looking after her dramatic interests generally. I knew every line of "Fauntleroy." All the children who were considered for the leading part were first approved by me. I then realised that they are natural born actors, and that it is rarely that a youngster cannot easily memorise lines and master stage business. How many little Lord Fauntleroy's there were, beginning with Elsie Leslie and Wallace Eddinger! The latter had, even as a tiny boy, unusual personality. He was excellent in the part, although nothing could have been more unlike his own character than was that of the hero of the play.

Mrs. Burnett always adored children and still does. She wanted to know each boy and girl who were her interpreters, so insisted that "Wallie" Eddinger, as he was then called, should be brought to see her at the Clarendon Hotel. Elsie Leslie had often visited her, as she had already been featured in "Editha's Burglar," with E. H. Sothern.

I had been thrown in contact with Wallie, and knew that he was a one-hundred-per-cent. real boy. There was nothing sentimental nor angelic about him. He was a child of nature, used language which was at times more forcible than polite, and invariably spoke in a vernacular which was his very own. Thus

I had some little misgivings as to the effect of his visit, especially when he always seemed so very gentle upon the stage.

I discovered that the prospect of this interview bored him considerably. It seemed to him a waste of his play-time. However, we reached Mrs. Burnett's door, knocked, and were instantly admitted.

At once he was surrounded with every toy that could possibly delight his heart and with an added generous supply of cake and candy.

The boy said very little at first, but looked fixedly at his benefactress, then suddenly exclaimed: "Who are you, anyway?" "Why, I am the author of the play in which you are acting," said Mrs. Burnett. Wallie, not at all convinced, insisted: "Say, you didn't write it all alone, did you?" "Certainly, my little man," replied Mrs. Burnett, "I wrote the story first, and then I wrote the play, and I mean to write ever so many more stories for dear little children like you."

Apparently unaffected by her kind interest in him, Wallie still remained sceptical, for finally, after a moment's pause, he said: "Gee! You may be all right, only I didn't think you looked as though you could do it."

Mrs. Burnett was enchanted with his ingenuous frankness, and I believe in consequence that she has always had a very large place in her heart for Wallace Eddinger. She has watched his career with more than a passing interest, so that when he carried the public by storm as the roystering bully, Captain Applejack, I doubt whether anyone was more pleased with his success than the dear little lady who had created his first part.

Personally I shall always feel very grateful to Mrs. Burnett for the opportunity she gave me. Through my association with her interests, I learned the practical side of the theatre. I began to understand the relative positions of playwright and producers. The experience was invaluable to me, and laid the foundation of my subsequent business career.

Mrs. Burnett and I worked out many a problem together, so that at the end of our agreement, when I could no longer

render her any further service professionally, our friendship grew and became cemented during the years which followed. Who knows but that some day we may again become associated in a play ?

My last business connection with " Little Lord Fauntleroy " revolved around the company which sailed to produce it in Australia.

I was offered a twenty-five per cent. interest in this tour for the sum of three thousand dollars, money I had saved through hard work. Like all who have anything to do with the theatre, the spirit of speculation entered into my veins. Sooner or later this happens inevitably. The manager of the company had leased the rights of production for this territory. He was a slick and persuasive individual. I handed over my three thousand dollars to him without hesitation. It looked as though " Little Lord Fauntleroy " could not fail.

The play made good in Australia, as it had done elsewhere. Each week showed a healthy profit on paper, but never a cent of my investment nor a cent of the earnings did I ever see. In any other business this fellow would have been arrested as a crook, but such procedure is not considered etiquette in the theatrical world.

All we say, as a rule, is that a man has had hard luck, and another chance to rob is given him. Not only did I never receive any money from Australia, but my slippery friend deceived me so successfully that he persuaded me to sail for France, to produce the play there. I was promised a deposit of five hundred dollars to await my arrival in Paris, plus fifty dollars a week for expenses, plus 50 per cent. of the profit.

There were far too many " pluses," as I afterwards learned.

Throughout my life, I have always found that events which seemed at the time disastrous ultimately developed into positive blessings. In fact, I have never known of one instance when this has not proved to be the case.

Had my first theatrical venture been a success, I doubtless would have become a manager, rather than an author's

representative ; and I am satisfied that I could never have stood the physical strain of such an uncertain and nerve-racking occupation.

The perils of Wall Street are nothing as compared to the pitfalls of Upper Broadway.

In this connection let me state that one of the peculiarities of this business is that when a manager makes six productions, four of which are successes and two of which are failures, the two failures more than consume the profits of the four successes.

Profits are negligible when compared with losses.

However, believing in the proposition which the manager of our Fauntleroy company had made to me, I sailed for France in March of that year, taking with me three hundred dollars, practically all that was left after paying my steamship fare above my investment to which I have already referred. We had a most tempestuous voyage, cold and dreary. When we landed at Havre, it was in the midst of a French imitation of an American blizzard.

I went to the Hôtel Frascati, then only a summer resort. In winter it was dismal. The fire in my room, for which I paid extra, consisted of a few wretched faggots burning in a very small fireplace. I felt depressed and lonely. Suddenly a cable was brought to me. I opened it, hoping for good news, instead of which it informed me that our manager had absconded, and that he had only sent me abroad in order to give himself more time in which to transfer the funds beyond legal reach.

There I was, stranded three thousand miles away from home and friends, all of my savings lost, and with the paltry sum of three hundred dollars as my sale asset.

I kept warm that night by pacing up and down the floor, wondering whether I had better use my meagre cash to pay for a return ticket to New York or whether I had better push on to Paris, in an effort to build up a business, for I reasoned that the same brain which was able to earn my first three thousand dollars might still prove its value by serving other authors as it had served Mrs. Burnett.

To return to America was to confess that my career so far had ended in lamentable failure. To go back to my family to be supported was an admission of weakness. My pride was involved.

The next morning the weather had changed. The sun was shining brightly. The temperature had gone up some twenty degrees. The glistening sand was beneath my window, the blue sea was calm and beautiful. I felt inspired. My optimism had returned. I abandoned all idea of going back—Paris and life were ahead of me. I knew with everything in me that I would succeed. No other course was possible. Our surest capital lies in ourselves. To husband one's own resources from within prevents a run on the bank from without. Ideas may be stolen. They can never be taxed. I backed myself to win, which is the keynote of success in any undertaking. Exhilarated by these reflections, I paid my bill at the hotel, proceeded to the railway station, bought a second-class ticket, and took the eight o'clock express to Paris. I felt with Monte Cristo that the world and all its treasures were mine.

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CHAPTER IX

I MUST now retrogress somewhat, in order to introduce certain friendships and interests which have played such a conspicuous part in my life.

Amateur theatricals were then very much in vogue. We had fewer theatres and no movies. Diversions were rarer. Dancing was confined to private evening entertainments. Cabarets were unknown. Jazz was undiscovered.

The first country club had come into existence owing to the vision and enterprise of Pierre Lorillard. Tuxedo Park was projected, and in due time it became an actuality.

I was visiting some friends there when I met with an unfortunate accident. I sprained my ankle while dancing. The pain was for the moment intense, but suddenly there was a buzz of excitement, when a slim and graceful young girl passed through the ballroom. I asked her name and was informed that she was Elsie de Wolfe, a newcomer from abroad, who had considerable talent as an amateur actress, and who was there to take part in the club entertainment. I remember that my remark was far from flattering, as I was not in the least impressed by her appearance. Her foreign type and her French distinction elicited no admiration as far as I was concerned. She was exotic, but in looking back I must confess that I was then rather crude. I have always attributed my critical attitude on this occasion to the severe pain I was suffering in my injured ankle.

It was soon after my visit to Tuxedo, and through my interest in the amateur stage, that I met Elsie de Wolfe. My

friends, the Hewitts, asked us to luncheon. Caroline Duer, who had written some quite lovely sonnets, was also present ; she had given me copies of them. After leaving the dining-room, I took Miss de Wolfe aside, showed her these verses, and asked her to read them aloud, which she did, with a very pleasurable appreciation of their quality.

I found her so extremely intelligent that she quite altered the first unfavourable impression which she had made upon me that night at Tuxedo. Thereafter we met frequently, so that before many months had elapsed a friendship between us was established, which from that time until the present has remained unbroken and inviolate.

This was in the year 1884.

Miss de Wolfe's father was a physician, born in Halifax, N. S. Her mother was Scotch, although her family had removed to Canada when she was comparatively young. At sixteen years of age, Elsie had been sent to visit her Scotch relations, who held distinguished positions in Aberdeen, belonging as they did to the well-known family of Charteris, which had furnished a long line of deans and professors to the Universities and pulpits of Scotland.

The austerity and simplicity of this environment were unsympathetic to a girl of her temperament, for from her baby days she had been indulged in her artistic sense and in her love of beauty, both of which qualities, by the way, being her dominant expression even at a very early age.

Throughout her life, her chief articulation has invariably been through some form of art. Her colour sense was her first sense. Never could she spend fifteen minutes amid new surroundings without longing to move the furniture, to rearrange the ornaments, and to pull about the draperies, thus visualising all the while what she might do if only she were given a free hand in the room.

She knew intuitively where a few flowers would produce the best effect, and where the angle of a chair would improve the general appearance. She felt furniture and decoration through

every fibre of her being, and waved a magic wand while creating a lovely interior.

This clearly indicates the very beginning of the career which has since made Elsie de Wolfe internationally famous.

When she adopted the stage temporarily as a profession, it was a road leading to her final fulfilment. She never in reality deviated from her natural bent. Her talents, wherever they might find expression, were always focussing toward the objective. Slowly but surely she was coming into her own. She travelled, she studied, she acquired knowledge. Her *flair* in detecting the real from the imitation was extraordinary. Her sense of proportion was unerring. She might make a mistake in many things, but she was physically incapable of making a mistake in the matter of taste.

For this reason, and without any apparent effort, she was always perfectly dressed. A simple cotton frock upon Elsie de Wolfe became a poem, and a shawl thrown across her shoulder an inspiration. Probably her proverbial generosity to other women has protected her from much jealousy so far as clothes are concerned, for, no matter how novel or unique may be a model in her possession, I have never known her to refuse lending it to a friend who desired to copy it.

The misconception which obtains in the mind of the amateur actor or actress regarding the professional is often very amusing. I remember once hearing a young woman who aspired to become a real actress say : " Just wait until I am on the stage—no more ginger ale and ham sandwiches for me at night, only champagne and *paté de foie gras*."

In after years, when I would be supping with some of the greatest stars, I used to wish my little friend were with us, to drink beer and to eat bacon and fried eggs.

Speaking of " stars," Elsie de Wolfe enjoyed this proud distinction amidst the amateurs for several seasons. I was duly impressed by her importance, so that on one occasion, when I heard her mother reproaching her in no gentle terms for

some line of conduct, I remonstrated, saying : " Oh, remember dear Mrs. de Wolfe, that the star must be handled carefully."

" She is no star to me," answered Mrs. de Wolfe, which remark gave Elsie and myself a hearty laugh, for we both had a keen sense of humour, which has never deserted us in all the years of our intimacy. Many a domestic storm has thereby been averted.

Perhaps if husbands and wives exerted it occasionally, there might be fewer divorces. When two people can laugh together, there is less room for tears, and when they can see a joke at the same moment, catastrophe is often prevented. A sense of humour is probably the one saving grace in the world. It can save nations as well as individuals.

With the exception of an occasional visit, I knew little of the so-called fashionable resorts. Therefore when it was proposed that we should rent a house together in Lenox, Mass., for the season, I gladly agreed to the suggestion.

We found just what we wanted, a little cottage, not too impractical nor uncomfortable. There was a certain " picnic " atmosphere about it all which, being young, we really enjoyed. We had hosts of friends in Lenox, who welcomed us so cordially that the weeks of relaxation flew by. The experiment was so successful that it was not very long before we decided we would cast in our lots together. We had both determined not to become lotus-eaters, but to be bread earners, hence independent. We could see our families daily and we could, through freedom of action and protection from unproductive demands upon our time, better qualify to be of practical assistance to those who might ultimately depend upon us if ever the rainy day came ; and it did come with a vengeance. When Miss de Wolfe's father died, he left nothing. He had lived from year to year upon his earnings as a physican without setting anything side.

When my father died, we found that he had speculated so disadvantageously that there was little to fall back upon. But long before these cyclones struck, both Miss de Wolfe and I were

respectively hard at work. From that time on business and pleasure went hand in hand. It was this which determined my friend to adopt the stage professionally. She had had so much training as an amateur that she made the common mistake of believing that this would equip her for the broader field.

Like many others, she soon discovered this error. Personally I am convinced that experience in amateur theatricals is a detriment rather than an advantage to anyone aspiring to the stage. Most that has been learned has to be unlearned. The very self-confidence which this experience engenders produces oftentimes an undesirable result.

The praise of injudicious friends frequently fosters bad mannerisms. Glaring faults are glossed over and indications of talent are generally exaggerated.

A young man or woman (with very few exceptions) who has never been on the amateur stage is a more docile and plastic pupil than one who has.

The stage is a hard profession. Work and constant work, humility, perseverance and great physical strength are all essentials to success. The road is long and bleak. Each step forward must be with bleeding feet. I have felt more heart throbs through sympathy with the disappointed and discouraged members of the profession than I have ever experienced by contact with the victims of material poverty. The latter may starve with their bodies ; the former with their souls, although I might add both at times go hand in hand.

The uncertainty of enduring engagements, the long lapses of weeks with nothing to do, the wearing rehearsals which only lead to the brief run of a failure, the jealousies, the injustices, the disappointments are all heart breaking. The salary when received may seem large, but how quickly it melts during the periods of enforced idleness.

And what shall I say of the travelling, which even the greatest stars cannot escape ! Life in a train is a wretched existence under the most favourable conditions ; a three-room modest apartment in a side street of a small town is preferable in my

put anything over on me like that. Don't I know how Taft and Bryan look? Ain't I seen their pictures?" With this he slammed out of the door and we all had a good laugh at his expense.

It was in this house that I met the young and brilliant journalist, Arthur Brisbane. He was brought by Mrs. Chatfield-Taylor, of Chicago, to take a simple supper with us after the play. His personality then was as marked as it is to-day. At that time we had heard little of W. R. Hearst. It was Brisbane who was the high light of the new school of journalism. I had known all of his seniors, and can recall hours spent at Dosoris, personally conducted over the estate by the owner, Charles Dana, the able and feared proprietor of the *New York Sun*, who delighted in oriental porcelain, and who spent a fortune on exotic shrubs. I could write chapters about the celebrities who frequented our little drawing-room in the old Washington Irving house, and could recall many associations connected with the distinguished men and women from abroad who passed our way.

It was a glorified Ellis Island, and to many of our good friends it became the real Port of New York.

CHAPTER X

AT the time of my fateful decision in Havre, which I have already described, Elsie de Wolfe was in Paris. She had gone there to study, and was living modestly at a small hotel. It was natural that I should join her, and I doubt whether I was ever before so glad to see anyone at the end of a journey, for as I neared the city I confess to feeling rather awed at my temerity. How could I impose myself in this strange land? How was I to plead my cause with French authors, alone and unaided? My knowledge of the language was meagre, and only connected with a classroom. However, after a few weeks of persistent effort, I acquired a certain facility of expression, so that I soon earned the reputation of making myself always clearly understood, which is an essential in business.

There was a rather conspicuous actress on the American stage, whom I had met. Her name was Kate Forsythe. She had played lead with John McCullough for several seasons. I had been taken to see her in her apartment in New York so that I might inspect her wonderful bedstead, made entirely of repousée silver. It stood upon a platform eight inches high. I remember that she explained its existence by saying that she had invested in some silver mines which had developed so wonderfully that the directors had presented her with this bedstead, as they regarded her their mascot.

She was an amiable person, and so when I ran across her in Paris I found her only too willing to furnish me with the information for which I was sorely in need; it seemed she had had some dealings with the French Society of Authors, which afterwards I

learned was the close corporation of the dramatists I was so anxious to reach.

Its president was Victorien Sardou, with whose plays I was more or less familiar. His "Fedora" and "Dora" had already been very successfully produced in America.

As I learned more of the men who were then writing for the stage, I decided that unless I could enlist Sardou's interest in my undertaking that it would be a sheer waste of time, for he was not only the president of the Authors' Society, but its ruling spirit. His word there was law. It soon became evident that in order to accomplish anything I must have his support and his endorsement.

I knew that up to that time selling plays in America upon a royalty basis was an unknown system, so far as the French authors were concerned. They had never found anyone they could trust to look after their interests at such a distance.

While this was the method followed in their own country, to adopt such a hazardous system abroad was quite another matter, as it involved the author receiving a percentage of all the gross receipts at each and every performance of his play, which gross receipts should be duly checked up.

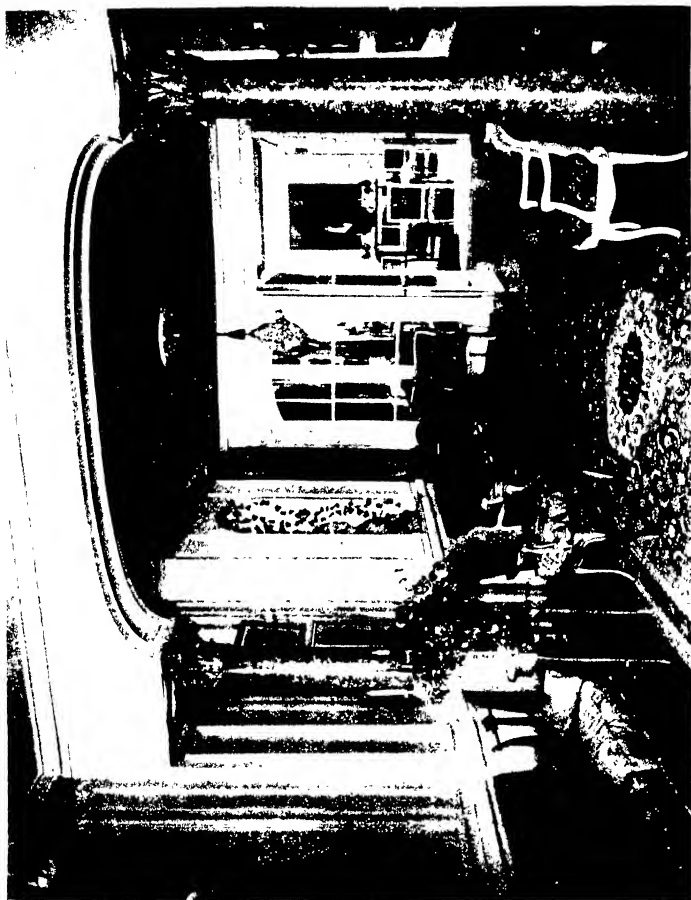
The other system was to sell the dramatic rights for a fixed sum, according to the territory to be covered.

It was the latter method which had always been followed by Sardou and his associates in our country, until I appeared on the scene with my project.

Of course there was a certain risk attached to it, for if the play should fail the percentages or royalties would be very small, whereas the fixed sum, even though not large, might prove to be the proverbial bird in the hand.

On the other hand, if the play scored, the amount earned in royalties would be infinitely larger. That no argument was necessary was due to the fact that this was the accepted procedure in France.

But how was I to reach Sardou? That was the burning



THE MARBURY-DE WOLFE RESIDENCE ON SEVENTEENTH STREET,
NEW YORK

(Originally the home of Washington Irving)

question. Who could give me a line of introduction to him ? I cast about, but the situation only grew more hopeless.

I found that he lived in the Rue du General Foy, but how to get an interview with him was my haunting and hopeless preoccupation. I again put on my thinking cap. The atmosphere was cleared. Why wait for any intermediary ? It was up to me to write him a letter which would compel his attention. I must interest him enough to see me and this in as few words as possible.

I sent my letter to Victorien Sardou, asking him to accord me a little of his valuable time. This was posted on a Friday. On Monday morning I received his reply saying, that if I would call upon him at nine o'clock on the following day, he would see me for 15 minutes. He had taken my request literally. I was there ahead of time. Sharp on the tick of the hour, his study door opened and I saw this great man. He greeted me affably. I felt then, as I felt during the many years of our subsequent friendship, that Sardou's personality was one of the most vibrant I had ever encountered. His face suggested a Voltaire touched by human sympathy. It was mobile beyond description. His eyes were illuminated by intelligence. His glance was direct. He was incapable of evasion. His smile was most magnetic, although those same features could at times seem cold and severe. He spoke with decision and invariably in short staccato sentences.

The one quality which he demanded from all those with whom he came in contact was honesty. His patience was inexhaustible once he had confidence in the individual who taxed it for advice and for help. He could be sympathetic and tender as a woman ; on the other hand I have seen him unforgiving and relentless. If he made up his mind as to the integrity of a cause nothing could prevent him from throwing himself into it with a zeal and an intensity that carried his enemies before him. He was a splendid fighter and a good loser.

I may in this summing up of Sardou's chief characteristics have amplified somewhat the initial impression I had of him,

but as I found him that morning, I found him through the years of our long friendship. The man was revealed in that first flash of acquaintance.

It was a rare thing to see him without the little black velvet biretta or cap which he always wore for fear of draughts. A loose coat, baggy trousers, felt slippers, soft shirt and bow tie completed his working costume. His desk was long, covered with pamphlets and papers, neatly sorted and in piles. Disorder with Sardou was unknown. He had a precise mind.

He asked me to be seated and swiftly demanded the object of my visit. I plunged into my subject ; told him that I wished his aid in revolutionising the method of selling French plays in the United States. I pointed out convincingly that he himself would have reaped an infinitely greater harvest had he been paid royalties. All the while I was conscious of one thing, namely, that I had to make good with Sardou in those 15 minutes and that unless I captured his interest then, all opportunity of my doing so would be lost. This recognition of the situation did not produce nervousness, on the contrary it clarified any haze which was in my mind. I was perfectly cool and collected. My mental machinery was working with regularity and at top speed. At the end of the time allotted to my visit, I arose promptly to the minute, thanked the great man for his attention, and proceeded toward the door. He called me back, saying that he had 15 minutes more at my disposal if I would sit down again.

I knew then that my battle was won. At the end of the half-hour, I was urged to return the following morning, which I did. This was followed by several other conferences.

I purchased and brought with me a map of the United States. I showed my listener the relative position and population of each of our big cities. I described the method of touring four companies in a successful play at the same time. I proved conclusively what the gross receipts from this aggregate of companies might be.

My victory was complete. Soon Sardou introduced me to

the leading dramatists of the day. I was taken to the Society of Authors, and was there endorsed before the general agents, Georges Pellerin and Gustave Roger, who were at the head of the organisation.

At the end of three weeks it was evident that I would be appointed the sole representative of the majority of the French dramatists. One after another either sought me out or wrote for an interview. Messrs. Pellerin and Roger were ready to give me their official co-operation. Oddly enough, it was I who insisted upon presenting credentials, as no one, not even Sardou, had asked for them. I was taken on faith. However, our Minister to France at the time was Mr. Whitelaw Reid, a friend of my father's.

I think he must have been most generous in his recommendation, for when Miss de Wolfe and I dined with Mrs. Reid and himself in their imposing residence in the Avenue Hoche, our host told me with some amusement that he had been happy to give me a "character."

Thus was the last obstacle removed, so that for 16 years I was the official agent for the French dramatists in all English-speaking countries.

During this long period practically every French play which appeared in English form passed through my hands. I knew personally all of the leading authors, and many a happy and congenial hour was spent in their gay, illuminating and instructive society.

CHAPTER XI

PRIOR to leaving America I had watched with considerable interest the beginning of Charles Frohman's career as a theatrical manager. He was the younger brother of Daniel Frohman. It was the latter who first introduced him to me. I had heard of his sensational purchase of "Shenandoah," a play by Bronson Howard, which was produced at the old Boston Museum. All of the prominent managers had gone over from New York to see its first performance. At the end of the third act they were convinced that the play was so poor that they would have none of it. The embarrassing feature of their adverse verdict was that they knew the author intimately and felt that he expected one of them at least to bid for the control of the property. In those days a production at the Boston Museum meant merely a local leasing of the play.

Under the circumstances, to meet Howard at the fall of the curtain was the last thing that these gentlemen wished to do.

No explanation of their pocket inertia would then be possible, save by admitting the ghastly and unflattering truth.

Suddenly A. M. Palmer suggested the happy solution of their problem; they could take the ten o'clock train back to New York on some plea of urgent business.

This brilliant idea was adopted with enthusiasm. They ran from the theatre in a body, congratulating themselves upon their escape from an obviously disagreeable situation.

However, there was one young man from this city who remained. This was Charles Frohman, whose earnings were then very modest. As the curtain fell, he approached a friend

in the audience who had come on from San Francisco, a man who had built several theatres through the west and on the coast, who had been financially successful, and who was looking over the Eastern field with an idea of extending his activities. His name was Al Hayman. While travelling with the Haverly Minstrels, Charles Frohman had run across him. He knew that Hayman stood ready to back his judgment when the proper moment arrived. Frohman had not only an absolute confidence in the value of "Shenandoah," but also the vision which anticipated its success.

Assured by Hayman that he and his friend Hooley would lend him the necessary amount for the venture, Frohman bounded upon the stage, accosted the author and said, "Mr. Howard, I want your play."

Howard, who was expecting the powerful fraternity from New York, was a little embarrassed by the abrupt method of the unknown visitor. Who was he? Where had he come from? His ignorance was quickly enlightened.

"I am Dan Frohman's little brother," said Charles, "and I am here to buy your play. That is all there is to it. How much do you want for it, sir?"

At that moment, as all through his life, Charles Frohman's magnetism, his wonderful personality, his dominant individualism, won the day. What he wanted, he got.

That very night the contract was signed. Soon Frohman made the production of "Shenandoah" in this city. Its success was overwhelming, and demonstrated that the group of astute managers who had run away from Boston on an early evening train had also run away from thousands of good dollars.

Thus the foundation was laid of Charles Frohman's subsequent career. His next step was to establish in West Twenty-third Street his stock company, of which Maude Adams was a member.

The control of one theatre after another followed. Charles Frohman and I became warm friends. He proved his confidence

So bursting in he exclaimed, "Cut out that talk and get down to business. What I want to know is, does Dooose play or doosn't she?"

I couldn't stand any more, so beat a retreat, leaving the gentlemen still at it. However, I noticed that Madame Duse did play the *matinées* and survived both them and Stetson.

Those were wonderful days, when the present high-browed theatre was unknown. We had no problems which the playhouse was supposed to solve. We understood farces, melodramas and burlesques, with an occasional polite comedy or a romantic drama thrown in, but the sailing was plain and straight and devoid of complications resultant from too much culture.

Bernard Shaw had not begun to write with his pen in his cheek, and the present dull triangle had still to be imported. Those were very happy days for the purveyor of plays.

But to return to my opening up of the French market as previously described; Charles Frohman was my first customer. The most conspicuous success running in Paris at the time I met Sardou was a farce by Alexandre Bisson, called "*Feu Toupinel*," or the late Mr. Toupinel. The story was side-splitting, written around the marital adventures of a hero who was juggling with a wife and a mistress at the same time, and who were brought face to face in the same scenes.

Not a manager who saw it would risk its purchase. Bisson had had no bid as yet for the American and English rights. I remember my admiration of this cleverly-constructed farce. Surely there must be some way of putting it through a moral laundry. Suddenly a bright idea came to me. Make Toupinel a bigamist who had deceived two honourable ladies instead of one, and the problem of adaptation was solved. I rushed to Bisson to explain my inspiration. He was horrified beyond expression. He could not believe that any public would tolerate the capering of a Lothario who had trifled with two confiding ladies, rather than with one legitimate wife and with a

temptress of experience who knew exactly what she was doing. I could not change his Gallic viewpoint, but received his consent to make any changes I felt might sell the play.

I wired to Charles Frohman, who accepted my endorsement of the property and my assurance, that despite the attitude of Augustin Daly, A. M. Palmer and others, that I had found the solution of the difficulty. The contracts were signed, a deposit was paid to the French author on account, William Gillette was engaged to make the English version, and the despised and discarded "Feu Toupinel" enjoyed a long and prosperous career in this country and in England, under the title of "All the Comforts of Home," which was a wholly innocuous entertainment.

Bisson incidentally made 50,000 dollars in royalties from this production instead of the small sum of 4,000, which was the original amount he expected, had he sold the play upon the old system of a cash payment.

Of course my successful manipulation of this farce gave me a prestige beyond words. It was a clear case of money having talked, so that for years I had no rival where French authors were concerned.

One play after another was sold by me. I represented such authors as Feydeau, Meilhac, Halévy, Blum and Toché, Richepin, Bataille, Pailleron, Moreau and others as they came along, in fact every man who wrote material that was marketable for the English speaking stage.

Many an anecdote recurs to my mind connected with these writers. I recall a general rehearsal of Pailleron's "La Souris," which was a dull contrast to his comedy "Le Monde ou l'on s'ennuie" (The Society where one is bored). Francisque Sarcey, the eminent critic, came to me as the curtain went down and, in reply to my adverse criticism, said, shrugging his shoulders as only a Frenchman can: "Ah, mademoiselle, do not be too hard on poor Pailleron. In some ways he is greatly to be envied. Do you know any other author who could have two plays running at the same time in the same theatres?"

Yet this is what we have witnessed to-night. We have had 'La Souris' on the stage and 'Le Monde ou l'on s'ennuie' in the audience."

Neither Miss de Wolfe nor I were rich in worldly goods at that time. We had made our budget, which called for an expenditure of six francs a day. We could afford no more. We owned bicycles, and when it became too warm in Paris we determined upon a trip on wheels. Of course Touraine was then the paradise of sightseers, besides it had a special attraction for us in the fact that the country was flat so that there would be no hill climbing. Off we started, and I very much doubt whether any girls ever had a better or a healthier time than ourselves. We could not seem to see enough châteaux, yet we saw them all. Each with its traditions, each with its architectural beauty, each full of romance, each rich in inspiration. We rolled along over the hot, dusty roads, delighting in everything we discovered and amused with every obstacle we encountered. It was indeed a holiday.

Later we found ourselves in Brittany, where at Pont Aven, thanks to Mère Julia, we lived well within our means, if you could dignify our monotonous "eats" as food. We had sardines cooked and uncooked at practically every meal. There were no toilet facilities of any kind. Hot water for one's ablutions and hot coffee for one's breakfast were served in the same, well-worn pewter jug. Milk was an extra, whereas wine was included in our board. But we found several artists there, who, like ourselves, were seeking atmosphere and economy, and many a merry outing did we all have together. In 1919, out of sheer curiosity, I went off my route to revisit Pont Aven and the little inn where I had passed such happy days. Mère Julia was still alive, the inn showed no changes, the same disorder, the same sardines—all were there to greet me.

We were not the only women who enjoyed bicycling. No one was a greater expert at it than Madame Melba, who was then Nellie Melba to us.

She left the rôle of prima donna behind her when she came

to France in those early days of her success. She was like a rollicking schoolgirl, full of fun and enthusiasm, so that we enjoyed many a good time. As I grew older I developed a rooted distaste for grand opera, from which prejudice I have never recovered. I agreed with Alphonse Karr, who described singing as an expensive kind of noise. It seemed to me senseless to hear fat Italian gentlemen, who could hardly be squeezed into their velvet doublets, repeating over and over again to the sobbing sopranos that they loved, loved, loved them. There never was the slightest secrecy about it, for it was literally shouted from the battlements and listened to by the lady companion who had a contralto voice, which came in handy for a quartette, as well as by the choral mercenaries who stood without, guarding the parapets with flashing steel.

Oddly enough, I knew personally all the great singers, and succeeded in retaining their friendship, despite the fact that not even wild horses could drag me to hear them.

Melba once persuaded me to attend a performance of "*La Bohème*" in Covent Garden, and, although she was applauded until the old rafters rang, I infinitely preferred her as my everyday companion on the bicycle. In recent years Mme. Frances Alda, that delightful artist, insisted on one occasion that I should attend a rehearsal of "*Prince Igor*." It was an awful experience which I shall never forget. It was depressing in the extreme.

The opera-house was as gloomy as a morgue, the singers were without make-up and costume, the shrieking light of day forced itself through the upper borders, the music, without melody of any kind, groaned on, while poor Alda seemed tossed about from one Italian gentleman to another in such tragic fashion that it was evident that happiness could never be her lot. She was foredoomed to unrelentless misery. I urged her at the time to quit and to end her days amidst the cheerful surrounding of effervescent musical comedy.

However, she would not take my advice, and so is still coping with the melancholy environment of the Metropolitan Opera House. It seems such a pity, because she is really a

genial and gregarious soul who knows how to laugh, who loves to dance, and who is a real human being outside of her imposing frame of grandeur.

But to return to those vagabond days in France.

Sardou became our very dear friend and, whenever we were in Paris, never a week passed that we did not lunch with him there, or, if he had removed to his beautiful Château at Marly-le-Roi, we would go out to dine with him, his wife and his family, consisting of three sons and one daughter, Geneviève, who is now the Marquise de Flers, wife of the well-known dramatist whose brilliant comedies, written in conjunction with de Caillavet, are known the world over.

The Sardou estate at Marly-le-Roi stands on the left of the road and opposite the little village church. It is historical and full of reminiscences. Sardou himself was always an ambulating encyclopædia. He knew everything and more. He talked incessantly but held one spellbound, as his rare sense of humour, mingled with fascinating anecdote, produced a wonderful combination. His talent for reconstructing a historical ruin was without a rival. One could see the folks of long ago as they moved about in silk and crinoline. The stately minuet was danced before our very eyes. I remember being taken by Sardou to visit the Pavilion at Louvecienne which had belonged to the Comtesse du Barry. There was the very gate through which she was dragged shrieking with fear to face the guillotine in Paris.

The owner of what then remained of Madame du Barry's property was an American, a little old lady who it seemed had been a belle under the Second Empire. She was born in Philadelphia, but owing to her spirit of adventure had sailed for France. On the voyage she became acquainted with a pleasant Frenchman, whose idea of hospitality was to relieve the pretty American of all further responsibility, either social or financial. He took her to Paris, introduced her to a group of interesting personalities, taught her how to dress, had her learn to play the harp, found her an excellent chef, stocked her

cellar with vintage wines ; in fact, did all that any gentleman could do to make her life happy.

Madame enjoyed herself thoroughly up to a ripe middle age, when her protector decided to marry her off to an impecunious friend with a title. The Château at Louvecienne was given the lady as a wedding gift, and there she ended her days in 1913. As I sat and studied my aged hostess, who welcomed me as a compatriot, I could not but think how extraordinary it was that our own Quaker City had produced a successor to the famous Frenchwoman who had ruled a kingdom and who had destroyed an aristocracy.

Another famous dwelling near Marly was Le Cerf Volant, the châtelaine of which was a Madame Aubernon. She prided herself upon the coterie of eminent men who always gathered round her table. In order that nothing should be lost of the wit and talent which assembled, she insisted that each guest should speak in turn. To control this she had a little silver bell by her plate which she rang as she accorded the right of speech. I remember one very brilliant dinner in this interesting house at which many illustrious people were present. Ernest Renan, one of the guests, tried several times to interrupt, but was prevented from doing so by Madame Aubernon, who raised her hand in a gesture of reproachful protest. Finally, when Cabanel, who was speaking, stopped, the hostess graciously turned to Renan saying, " Now, monsieur, we shall be glad to hear you." " Ah, madame," answered Renan, " it is, alas ! too late. I merely wanted a second helping of spinach ! "

The only time I ever saw Alexandre Dumas fils was in the Sardou's vegetable garden at Marly. The master, as we called Sardou, was bending over his melon patch with a feverish interest. He had planted some seed which he had received from a friend, and was anxiously waiting for his melons to grow. Suddenly I looked up, and there coming down the path was Dumas, whom I knew by sight. We were introduced, then Dumas, who was a pessimist, gazing at his friend Sardou, the optimist, exclaimed : " How I envy you who can feel such

enthusiasm over a mere melon." To which Sardou replied, "How I pity you, my friend, who are incapable of such a sentiment!" The opposite character of the two men was exemplified at this meeting. Nothing ever depressed Sardou, whereas Dumas' black moments were chronic. I never saw Dumas again, for he died shortly after this.

CHAPTER XII

My life for many years seemed a constant journey between New York, Paris and London. Each incident of it was international, so it is impossible to reduce my experiences and impressions to any sequence or dates. I never kept a diary and never had a notebook. It is all haphazard in my mind; it is a living cinema, unravelling the story, introducing the actors, and presenting the close-ups! After all, it matters little. It is the personalities and the incidents which are of importance, especially as my chief desire is to convey to my readers my sense of obligation to those wonderful men and women whose paths I was destined to cross. A sponge in a pail soaks up water. To listen often soaks up brains. To meet those who have something to give out is a privilege. It is only the dumb-bells who, believing that their "thinks" are of such vast importance, often miss those of far greater value. Instead of listening to others they are too absorbed in the melody of their own voices and too deeply impressed by the importance of their own aims and interests. As we grow older one of our greatest dangers is that we may drift into garrulity, mistaking it for conversation.

My first office was in West Twenty-Fourth Street, in New York. I began with a small room and with the assistance of a young girl, who, at sixteen, had just finished her course in stenography and typewriting. My obligation was to pay a rental of fifteen dollars a month and her salary of ten per week.

I was bowed down by the sense of this responsibility. Commissions might come in slowly, then where would I be?

But fortune was on my side, so that I began the second month with the addition of a large room and the increase of thirty-five dollars for rental.

For a long while I remained in this locality and until the Empire Theatre was built, whither I removed, occupying for many years a suite of handsome offices directly over Charles Frohman's on the second floor and Al Hayman's on the third.

My business had increased in leaps and bounds, for not only was I established in this city, but I had opened offices in London and in Paris, with subsidiary connections in Berlin, Milan and Madrid.

The dream of Monte Cristo seemed to be coming true, for the treasures of the world were drifting my way as one foreign playwright after another became my client.

However, I determined not to neglect our American authors, who were increasing and multiplying. The first of importance who placed his work unreservedly in my hands, and who was loyal to me up to the time of his death, was Clyde Fitch.

How well I recall his initial visit! He had only been graduated from Amherst a short while when he wrote "Beau Brummel." Unluckily, both for himself and for me, he had sold this play outright to Richard Mansfield for the paltry sum of fifteen hundred dollars. It was from the despair caused by the realisation of this stupidity that he sought me for future guidance, so that never again would he be so foolish. I might add that this was the first and the last time that Clyde Fitch sold a play for a fixed amount. However, every time that we found Mansfield playing to a crowded house we consoled ourselves with the thought of Fitch's sudden entrance into prominence; nor were we ever deceived as to the value of the publicity due to Mansfield's superb performance and stupendous success.

To chronicle the long line of Clyde's ups and downs in authorship would require a volume. He was one of the most industrious men I have ever known, indefatigable in his efforts and undismayed by his rebuffs. He was simply ascending the



Photograph by A. Burt

VICTORIEN SARDOU

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road, although there were moments when he felt that after all his father might be right when urging upon him a business career.

Captain Fitch was always intolerant of his son's waste of time, as he regarded it. A graduate of West Point, an officer in the Civil War, he spoke a different language, and it was not until Clyde had reached the climax of success that his father gave in publicly, although I always believed, long before he confessed it, that there glowed in his heart a deep and sincere pride in the literary accomplishments of his one and only child.

On the other hand, if Captain Fitch seemed to fail in sympathy for his son's chosen profession, his mother made it up to her boy a hundredfold. She idolised him. He could do no wrong in her eyes, and the one passport to her affection, and to her interest, was an absolute admiration of Clyde and an unfaltering belief in his genius.

I have always thought that the chief reason why Fitch won out was because he never deceived himself as to the first night's real verdict. No matter how much friendly applause might resound in the theatre, no matter how many times he was forced to come before the curtain, he knew to a certainty whether his play had really scored or not.

He and Charles Frohman were alike in this as well as in some other respects, and when Frohman finally ceased to refer to him as "your pink tea author," he capitulated entirely, and not only gave Fitch opportunities to adapt foreign material, but purchased and produced many of his original plays.

Frohman's judgment was occasionally at fault, for instance when he refused "Nathan Hale" and the "Climbers." But on the whole his appreciation of Fitch as a dramatist was very sincere. The unhappy ending of "Nathan Hale" influenced Frohman's adverse decision, and the first act of the "Climbers," introducing a family in deep mourning after returning from a funeral, seemed to him a scene wholly impossible for our stage.

Let me state, as a matter of data, that in both these instances the reaction of the audience was favourable.

Not only were Fitch and Frohman in accord over things theatrical, but they shared many personal tastes. Their love of sweets was abnormal. They could never eat enough to satisfy their appetites, but in public they did not dare to wholly gratify themselves for fear of ridicule.

When in the same city they often made it a practice to sneak off and dine together, ostensibly for the purpose of discussing business, but one night I unearthed them in Frohman's apartment at Sherry's, where I found them surrounded by five desserts—rice pudding, ice cream, a layer cake, apple pie and a caramel custard. I shall never forget their expressions of guilty enjoyment.

Fitch adored beauty of landscape, and beauty of architecture. His sense of arrangement in his home produced a delightful atmosphere. He and Elsie de Wolfe were drawn together in a close and lasting friendship through their mutual love of decoration. They often tramped about in search of objects of art, although Fitch's taste was always the more rococo and florid, and he lacked the just reserve which Miss de Wolfe had early acquired through the distinction of her knowledge and through the cultivation of her mind.

Clyde Fitch was born with what the French describe as "a gift of the theatre."

His dramatic sense was keen. He was rarely mistaken as to the result of his effects.

His characterisations of women were, as a rule, more convincing than were those of men, for there is no use in blinking the fact that his own nature was a composite one, and that possibly he inherited more qualities from his gentle Southern mother than he did from his war-like, Connecticut father.

This commingling of the masculine and feminine is very common in artists. Their super-sensitiveness, their response to colour, their vibrant reactions, their emotional impulses invariably spring from a dual organisation; so that I have always maintained that the world owes much of its beauty to

this combination of feminine sensitiveness and of virile accomplishment. Each attribute supplements the other, and art has often become the richer for this duality. The mind of a man with the heart of the woman makes an ideal exotic that should not be despised, and how frequently they go hand in hand where artists are concerned.

After all, sympathy is merely imagination in operation, and who gives greater evidence of imagination than the dramatist who brings character to life, and who supplies to his public an impression of actuality produced through his fiction?

The men and women of his creation must be as real to his audience as they are to him. It is he, the writer, who breathes into them the breath of life. He must feel with them. Their laughter and their tears have sprung from him. His is the harp which hangs beyond the casement, receptive of sobbing winds and warmed by caressing sunshine.

It is the writer who, like the highly-sensitised plate, receives and distributes impressions, while he is at the same time an unerring chronicler of truth.

A dual nature, a dual understanding, a dual personality often unite in a wedlock which gives birth to genius.

Clyde Fitch died abroad in the year 1909. I was there myself at the time, but, by a strange fatality, was not with him during his last brief illness; whereas I had frequently taken long journeys to cheer him during his convalescences, for at various times while travelling he had fought attacks of excruciating pain. His physician in America had repeatedly urged the removal of his appendix, but Fitch, like many others, had a horror of the surgeon's knife; besides, he had found eminent specialists in Europe who insisted that they could successfully treat his case so that gradually he would be immune from these recurrent conditions.

The summer of his death he had taken a cure in Italy, and afterward had toured in his big car through the Dolomites and into Eastern France.

He enjoyed motoring almost more than anyone I have

ever known, so that a trip abroad without his car would have robbed him of most of its enjoyment. He had been having a delightful time, as his frequent postcards to me indicated. I was in a little village in Savoie when suddenly I received a wire from Chalons, sent by a friend who had been travelling with Fitch. The news was brief, but poignant, merely relating the fact that Clyde was there at the Hôtel de la Haute Mère de Dieu, where he was to undergo an immediate operation for appendicitis. I replied, offering to go to him at once, although this involved a twenty-four hour journey even with good connections. The answer came saying that Fitch preferred me to wait for a few days until he was recovering and better able to enjoy my companionship.

That was on Tuesday. On Saturday morning, Sept. 4th, in answer to my constant inquiries, another telegram assured me that the operation had been most successful, and that Fitch was out of all danger.

Three hours later I received the message that he had died of blood poison.

I need not dwell upon the shock, for all those who had known and admired him felt its effect as the news was flashed to America.

Afterward I learned the circumstances which had influenced the unfortunate choice of entrusting this operation to the skill of the French, small-town surgeon. By driving rapidly the distance between Chalons and Paris could have been covered in three hours, but by the time the little party reached the former place Fitch was suffering acute pain, and insisted upon stopping. This, of course, was a fatal mistake.

That night he refused to summon a physician but directed his his valet to apply a hot-water bag and to give him plenty of brandy. No remedies could have been worse. If only ice packs had been used instead, the inflammation might have been controlled. When the doctor did arrive it was too late to do anything but to perform the operation.

Sisters of the Order of St. Joseph were sent from the local

hospital, to act as nurses. Unhappily their services were only required for a short time.

Adjoining the hospital was a little mortuary chapel. This we had lined completely with flowers. In the centre Clyde's body was placed, and according to Catholic custom flickering candles lighted the remains.

The Sisters, with gentle voices, sat one at either side of the body, reciting the prayers for the dead. I could not but feel that this atmosphere of beauty and of peace would have been Fitch's own selection. In looking back, as I trace that long stretch of white road in France running from Verdun to Varennes and Châlons, I realise that it has become famous through its traditions of recurrent tragedy. Over it once rolled the Royal travelling carriage of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette as they fled with their children from the terrors of the Revolution. Tramping over it in 1914 marched the French army, which later at Verdun held out for months, giving their allies the steadfast assurance that the enemy should not pass.

It would almost seem that this highway in France was a highway of death, a monument of historical disaster as well as a row of milestones marking Clyde Fitch's last journey. He was in the midst of drama even when he died.

CHAPTER XIII

WHILE occupying my small offices in West Twenty-fourth Street there happened an incident worthy of telling because its hero has since become a luminary of our stage.

I had in my employ a shock-haired boy whom I sent on an errand to Charles Frohman's office, which was then at 1127, Broadway.

Suddenly a hurry call came for me. I was asked to go at once to the latter place. On arrival, I found the whole staff in a state of turmoil, for there in the middle of the room as star actors were an excited Irishwoman holding her sobbing son by the hand, while to one side stood my messenger, sullen and defiant.

It seemed that the lads had had an altercation which ended in the plunging of a pocket-knife into the arm of the tearful victim by the brigand who was in my employ.

During the intervals of voluble recrimination and of angry protest, the onlookers could not discover that any great harm had been done. A slit coat-sleeve and lacerated feelings seemed to sum up the damages.

Court was threatened by the outraged mother, the law on the miscreant was invoked, reason was out of order and argument was in vain. However, Charles Frohman came to the rescue and asked the woman whether brand new clothes for her offspring would not prove an acceptable settlement. After a while, when peace was restored, she consented, so that I had the honour of buying a grey suit for her child, consisting of

knickers and a Norfolk jacket. Above all I had the pleasure of seeing it worn, for the injured boy was Arnold Daly.

We became the best of friends after this episode, and in the subsequent years of his glory as a dramatic star I looked back with pride to the fact that I had enjoyed the privilege of giving him that suit of clothes.

Before dismissing this period of my life I wish to say a few words as to my first impression of William Gillette, the famous actor and author. When he appeared in "Secret Service" his restrained performance and her colloquial method was hailed as a revelation of realism.

However, I felt then about Gillette as I have often felt since, that nothing is so impressive as to produce a melodrama with a few barn-storming old-time thespians as the background, placing in evidence a chosen star or staress who lowers his or her voice as the others shout, who moves slowly when the others run, who seems deliberate when the others rant ; altogether it is an excellent and studied system of contrasts which invariably elevates the leading artist to the highest rank. Not that I wish to rob its inventors of any glory, for such a sterling actor as William Gillette did much to improve our standard, and, possessing a brilliant intellect, his contribution to the stage was of infinite value.

I desire to chronicle the fact that nevertheless the snobbishness of the theatre was not unknown even at that time. I doubt, by the way, whether there is any such flagrant snobbishness in the world as this. We have it to-day accentuated to a degree. A play to succeed now need not be a play at all. If it contains a sufficient number of scenes without dramatic form and devoid of comprehension, it is safe to predict that, provided it is imported from abroad and written by an author with a coughing, sneezing, unpronounceable name, it will be hailed as a masterpiece and coin money for its producers.

The less the gullible public understands what the play is about, the greater will be their enthusiasm. The so-called Little Theatre has not been an unmitigated blessing after all.

To spend an evening on a hard bench, looking at cubist decorations between the acts, need not necessarily mean that a great contribution has been made to the modern stage.

Possibly in the commercial theatre, where one can sit and be comfortable, where expert actors and not ambitious amateurs create the rôles, where the lighting of the stage is based upon tried invention, where the costumes are not made of near-silk nor of painted cotton, we may still be able to enjoy plays that are well and honestly written, that are the direct descendants of a legitimate ancestry, and that do not depend for your success upon high-browed pretence nor upon fashionable patronage ; or I might add upon critics whose erudition is gleaned from a cursory study of the contemporaneous theatre, and who pose to be pioneers in the discovery and unravelling of problems which often remind one of malformations preserved in glass jars.

At the period when I first established an office in London, the English stage was far ahead of our own as regards plays, acting and productions. No one then could have foreseen the rapidity with which we overtook its standards, and then progressed beyond them as we have done.

We were in the period of development. Our group of authors only included some dozen names of dramatists of any prominence. Our productions were carelessly assembled, our costuming inaccurate, our actors indifferent to diction, our voices untrained and uncultivated ; in fact, it was only such men as the Frohmans who in those days stood ready to spend lavishly and to strive at least to reach the English high level.

Henry Irving (not then knighted) had revolutionised the London stage. He was hailed as the greatest artistic producer of his generation.

George Alexander, of the St. James Theatre, made frequent trips to Paris, with the result that in modern comedies, especially, which he usually preferred, the settings were, as a rule, beautiful and accurate.

Charles Wyndham, John Hare, the Kendals, the Bancrofts,



Photograph by M. E. Hewitt

CLYDE FITCH

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and later Beerbohm Tree, all vied with each other in their contributions to art in the theatre.

The Drury Lane was the home of melodrama, and I had the good fortune to be the representative in this country of many of its most conspicuous successes. There was one general form in the building of these plays which was usually followed. A swift contrast between high life and the slums was proverbial. A brilliant ballroom peopled with aristocracy in magnificent garb, and a sudden shifting to a cellar under the river. Trap-door were in constant demand. No ship ever safely reached its destination. The hero and heroine had to be seen tossing about upon an angry sea, clinging to an uncertain raft, with faces upturned to the spotlight ; then another shifting of scene and the audience would be transported to a Derby race, the life of the favourite horse threatened by poison as he stood in his stall ; the honest and fearless jockey given a knock-out at the critical moment, just before the saddling bell was rung, and the heroine saving the day as she was flung upon the horse. The thrill of the performance was provided either by a burning building, a series of explosions, a balloon destroyed or a whole fleet sunk.

It was rarely that success did not crown the efforts of these authors and producers of blood-curdling drama.

The only interruption of the runs, as a rule, was caused by the Christmas pantomime, which was as much of an institution as the Tower of London. I have to-day the portrait of a great aunt who had longings for the stage. She wished to become a real, live actress, but the nearest she ever reached her heart's desire was to elope with the scenic artist of the old Drury Lane Theatre.

I remember so well my meeting with Gilbert and Sullivan, who had created a new model in the field of musical comedy. Probably Gilbert's lyrics and exquisite humour contributed the most to the great vogue of these men. Their names were trade-marks for many years, and their imitators, though feeble by comparison, are perennial.

I saw Sullivan first at one of those delightful Sundays of Mrs. Ronalds, who was a hostess of international renown. An American by birth, her husband a well-known merchant from Massachusetts, Mrs. Ronalds was one of the pioneers in the denationalisation of our women.

This contagion spread so rapidly that there are now many American grandmothers and even great-grandmothers whose names appear in the peerage.

For a long while Paris enjoyed supremacy as the magnet of attraction, but the superior advantages of English titles won the day. French marriages were looked upon askance, and, with the wreckage of the Gould-Castellane experiment, had a set-back which has lasted up to the present time.

English titles, however, are still in demand, so let our country not be wholly discouraged because continental aristocracy has crumbled to the dust. There are still a few openings in England.

Mrs. Ronalds gathered the most interesting people in her drawing-room. It was so the habit to lionise the successful actors and actresses of the day that a deadly pall of middle-class respectability settled upon the English stage.

The domestic life of the artists became of paramount importance. I recall a remark of a British matron after witnessing a performance of "Anthony and Cleopatra" as presented by Kyrle Bellew and Cora Potter: "How loving they seemed, poor dears! It reminded me of the life of our dear late Queen." Such unconscious satire was refreshing.

On another occasion I sat behind a stodgy couple when Seymour Hicks and Ellaline Terriss, his wife, were delighting their admirers. The man, looking approvingly at the scene, remarked that he always liked them as they seemed so young and gay; whereupon the woman replied: "That is so, my dear; but I always enjoy them because they lead such a beautiful home life and because they have such dear little children."

Virtue was carried to such an excess by the Kendals

that gradually a rebellious reaction set in, although the reign of thespian propriety lasted for a very long while in England.

Madge Kendal particularly was a whole vice commission in herself.

I was present on one occasion at a most amusing conversation between her and Sarah Bernhardt. She had gone to the latter's dressing-room to congratulate her upon her very fine performance, but qualified her approval by saying: "It is a pity, madame, that your plays always deal with passion, so that I cannot take my young daughters to see them." Whereat Bernhardt gave her the retort courteous by remarking: "Ah, madame, you should remember that were it not for passion you would have no daughters to bring."

While I admired Mrs. Kendal's art extremely, I confess that her constant use of toilet vinegar, instead of perfume, rather annoyed me. She considered that perfume, like the French language, savoured of immorality. I had barely known her when she warned me against certain prominent actresses with whom I should never be seen in public. This list was so long and so inclusive that I decided that I would enjoy myself more if I didn't memorise it. I often wonder what Mrs. Kendal thinks to-day when she studies modern manners and modern standards. As the dear lady is not yet in her grave, she can neither turn nor perform the daily dozen in it. How many bad hours she must pass!

However, her censoriousness was good-naturedly forgiven even by her contemporaries, for they felt the debt of gratitude due to Madge and Willie Kendal for all that they had done for the English stage. They were without exception the most delightful comedians of their day.

The majority of the managers who were my friends in London were subsequently knighted, and great was the heart-burning when those on the list for this honour were obliged to wait, while another more favoured had the privilege of bearing the coveted title.

To dearly love a lord was a general habit, and I remember one young director with an ambitious wife who never allowed his visitors to forget that the Princess Christian had dropped in to see them informally the day before.

When lunching at various times at this same house I observed that the meal was invariably interrupted by a note requiring an answer, brought in and announced as written by a Royal Highness, or by a duke or duchess.

This little comedy was staged with an automatic precision, and served its purpose as a rule by impressing the guests gathered around the table.

Nothing was more disturbing to the equanimity of the theatrical profession in England than this recurrent scramble for knighthood. From the day when that honour was conferred upon Henry Irving, it became an annual upheaval. One after the other the simple misters with ambitious wives dreamed of the new visiting cards they might soon to be privileged to have engraved.

When H. Beerbohm Tree became a successful candidate for Royal recognition, a member of the Garrick Club, having read the happy announcement in the Court Circular, and knowing that at least three days must elapse before the investiture could take place, accosted Max Beerbohm saying :

“ Old chap, this is very confusing about your brother. For the next few days how am I to address him ? What is he now, anyway ? ”

Max, with an inimicable twinkle in his eyes, answered : “ While he is Mr. Tree in the sight of the Law, he is now Sir Herbert in the sight of Almighty God.”

But nothing of this kind could exceed the story relating to a youth, well known in New York, who was always climbing socially. His father, by the way, was a retail haberdasher, and sold my grandfather, the Vice-Chancellor, very excellent shirts. My young friend had just returned from a trip abroad when, two days after his arrival home, he had a cable from

Lily, Duchess of Marlborough, inviting him to spend the weekend a fortnight hence. Whereupon he booked an immediate return passage, arrived at Blenheim in time and had the supreme joy of writing fifty letters to his friends on stationery bearing the magic name of this wonderful ducal estate.

CHAPTER XIV

PROBABLY the most conspicuous figure in England with whom I came in contact during the formative period of my business was Oscar Wilde. I had met him in America while he was there on his first lecture tour. He was dressed, as has often been described, in brown velvet knickerbockers, a soft silk shirt with a Byronic collar, a flowing scarlet tie and a huge white boutonnière in the lapel of his coat. His appearance seemed ridiculous, but nevertheless it was well conceived, and of value in stimulating curiosity and in providing copy for the Press.

I met him at the house of Professor Doremus, holding a cup of tea which he courteously offered me. At the time I felt little interest in the poet, and it was not until I really began to know him in later years, that I realised Wilde's intellectual potentialities. Like many others I fell under the thrall of his gifts as a conversationalist, and could listen with delight to the brilliancy of his talk. His wit scintillated incessantly. His joy in the phrases he compiled was always evident though never offensive.

Wilde's egotism, which eventually wrecked his life, was far too deep rooted to be of any passing importance. It was so obvious as to be beyond comment. It was so fundamental that it had become assimilated and an integral part of his being. It was such a magnificent gesture that it frequently inspired one to admiration. Nothing could exaggerate the importance of his rule in London society over a period of several years. There he reigned supreme, flattered, honoured, sought after and imitated. His sway over the imagination of

the British public was undisputed. He was literally without a rival. His self-confidence was abnormal. The atmosphere in which he lived supplied the virus, of which he, its victim, was sublimely unconscious.

Nothing short of an upheaval such as he finally experienced would ever have torn Oscar Wilde from his social moorings. While mocking and excoriating society, it was his very life. The adulation and servility which it exhaled was his daily diet. He reached the zenith of his success when his first modern play was produced, "Lady Windermere's Fan." This paved the way to a long line of dramatic triumphs. One comedy after another glittered from his pen. Epigrams became the keynote of conversation. From the very offset I was his representative in America. The plays reproduced here echoed his London fame. Their first nights were eagerly anticipated. Daniel Frohman was presenting "An Ideal Husband" at the moment of Wilde's downfall.

At the St. James' Theatre, where this play was then running, the manager, George Alexander, determined that he would withdraw it shortly after Wilde's arrest. He lacked the courage to continue, for like many others he was afraid of public opinion, and dared not be classed with the few friends who stood loyally by Wilde even in his darkest moments. Frohman, on the contrary, kept "An Ideal Husband" at the Lyceum until the play no longer attracted patronage.

Although I had heard incessant innuendoes as to the flagrant offences of Wilde's private life, nevertheless, knowing as I did that he was the centre of a circle which was powerful in its connections and influence, I never believed that Wilde would be the scapegoat of this band, yet such was the case. I could not reconcile myself to the fact that he alone was signalled out to pay the penalty; he, who from his prison cell was able to give the world "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," and "De Profundis." Oscar Wilde was incarcerated in a common prison until his brain power was crushed and his spirit broken. Upon the testimony of science, he should have

been sent to a sanatorium and not to a penitentiary. His was a clear case of psycho-perversity. Long before the final blow was struck it would have been a more humane thing to have placed him under the care of physicians rather than to have delivered him over to gaolers. But British justice was appeased when Oscar Wilde was condemned to pick oakum in a prison yard.

Directly after he was taken to Pentonville, I became troubled about his royalties, which had been accumulating, and which were in my hands. I was waiting until I could communicate with him, for I thought that at least these sums might be saved from the wreck in order to keep his wife and his two boys. Wilde had spent lavishly and without any recognition of his family responsibilities, therefore his list of creditors was long. When interrogated in court as to his assets, he referred to me as his American agent, stating that doubtless I had funds which could be appropriated toward the liquidation of his debts. I was soon notified that from that time on all money collected for Wilde would have to go through the legal channels. I confess to a sneaking disappointment at this turn of affairs, for sentimentally I felt the deepest sympathy for that wife and those little lads upon whom the sad fate of the husband and father had fallen.

How well I recall that house in Tite Street, Chelsea, full of charm and infinite taste. It was there before his own friends that Wilde was at his best. Many were the plots of plays which he thought out aloud. He almost wrote them as he talked. I remember one terrible tragedy, brutally conceived, which revolved around a most revolting theme. It took me many days before I could prove to him that, despite the dramatic value of the story, the managers and public would never tolerate the motive. Wilde was so totally devoid of any ethical sense that, while he accepted my verdict, he was not in the least convinced by it. Form and treatment were everything to him. Matter and morals meant nothing. I once complained that I had spent a dreary evening at dinner in the society of some dull but eminent people, saying that the

neighbour on my right was a member of the City Council, and that I had failed utterly in my attempt to interest him.

"Bless my soul," exclaimed Wilde, "it isn't possible that you care whether you interest your neighbour or not. The only thing of consequence when one dines out is whether one interests oneself!"

How often in life I have been reminded of this. Again, when I was sending him letter after letter urging him to come to New York to attend the rehearsals of a certain play which required most careful direction, he refused to sail. Afterward, in London, when I reproached him for not realising the logic of my arguments that should have brought him over to this country, he remarked that in my logic lay the whole difficulty, that I was so convincing and impelling that it made him stuff cotton in his ears and put blinders on his eyes, and that after each appeal from me he had become more and more determined not to allow so reasonable a human being as myself to become his mentor. I never again tried to make Wilde reasonable. Heaven knows that all of the stupid blunders of which he was guilty during the last days of his liberty could have been avoided, and his freedom assured, had he not wallowed in the morass of conceit, wilfulness and lack of common sense.

From time to time he wrote to me from prison; then one day I received from him a roll of manuscript in his own handwriting. It was the "Ballad of Reading Gaol." He said he had scribbled it down and wondered whether I would be his good angel and get him a few pounds for it, as he needed some personal articles which the sale of this poem might supply.

As I read it, it seemed like a voice from the dead. I remember that the tears rolled down my cheek. Then I realised that to sell it might, after all, be difficult. My fears were justified, for after peddling it about unsuccessfully, as no editor was willing to revive Wilde's memory in his magazine, I sold it to the *New York World*, which paid me \$250 for it. This money I sent to Wilde, together with the

manuscript which he wished returned. I have often wondered whether this original is still in existence. Then came the moment of his liberation. The story has been too often told. Shortly afterwards he sought me out in Paris, unkempt, forlorn and penniless. He told me that he had just staged a miracle play in the Latin Quarter.

I knew that Charles Frohman stood ready to commission a comedy from him, and had even authorised me to prepare the contract, and to advance Wilde \$500 on account, which I did. But when I presented the agreements to him for signature, his hand trembled, and he wrote "Sebastian Melmoth," a fanciful name he had chosen to conceal his identity. I looked at him fixedly and said, "This contract is being made with Oscar Wilde, who alone has the talent to fulfil it. I will accept no understudy, my friend. This is to be your recall to honour and to fame." His tears blotted the page. The first name was erased, and with firmness his own was affixed to that contract, which, alas ! was never productive, as he died shortly after its execution.

The last time I ever saw him was in Paris, living in a wretched room in the attic of a squalid little hotel, and the last letter I ever received from him was written to warn me against a youthful adventurer who was then exploiting stray Americans.

The bed on which his bulky form was stretched was covered with a hideous brown blanket. The furniture was of the ugliest and plainest description. Not a creature comfort of any sort was visible. I recalled the house in Tite Street. The contrast was appalling.

His few remaining friends had given until they could give no more. They at least had kept the roof over his head and had provided him with the necessities of life.

He barely recognised me. The memory of that visit is still painful.

One of the Fathers from St. Joseph's Church, in the Avenue Hoche, was with him at the end, but whether Oscar Wilde

was finally a convert to that faith, in which even in his most clouded moments he had a mystical belief, will always remain an unsolved problem until the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. It was said that when the priest leaned over to hear his dying confession, he found that the throat had become contracted, and that the lips had lost all power of speech. It seems a sinister fact that he who had revelled in irresponsible volubility all his life was unable at the end to proclaim a broken and a contrite heart.

Yet possibly at no time in his career had this poor soul been so near the recognition of truth which is eternal, as at this bitter moment of his physical disintegration and of his final detachment from that world from which he had been outcast.

I have always maintained that "De Profundis" was his masterpiece and a rich contribution to the treasure house of English literature.

It was conceived and written *in* the depths. It was given to the world as Oscar Wilde's last message to save others *from* the depths.

CHAPTER XV

THE English theatre in those days was unique. The list of managers included men of strong personalities. Henry Irving was the active dean of his profession. His productions became world renowned. I recall trivial effects which at that time were considered a sensation, but which to-day would be rejected and ridiculed. For instance, flames of fire were made by strips of ribbon upon which red and yellow lights were thrown. These were blown about incessantly by an electric fan operating from beneath the stage—a most simple, yet successful device.

Irving had as his right and left hand men, Bram Stoker and Harry Loveday. Money was spent lavishly and, I might add, wasted in the Lyceum Theatre. Economy there seemed sordid. I remember the indifferent expression on Irving's face when I once pointed out to him a certain saving of a thousand dollars in the handling of his scenery and costumes between London and New York. He heeded my suggestion by a characteristic elevation of his eyebrows.

When a new production was nearing completion the rehearsals were incessant and exhausting. I had a rare opportunity of being present on many such occasions because, as Sardou would never risk the discomfort and, from his viewpoint, the peril of crossing the Channel, he appointed me as his deputy to follow the rehearsals of "Dante" and of "Robespierre," both of which plays Irving had commissioned him to write in collaboration with Emile Moreau.

Henry Irving never rehearsed himself until the very end. An assistant stage manager, always with a book and pencil in

hand, was his understudy. This nation's idol would sit in the auditorium, watching every movement, and calling out suggestions, which would be at once scribbled upon the manuscript; especially was close attention paid to the position of the wandering spotlight.

Despite my expostulations, "Dante" was played almost in semi-darkness, with the sole exception of one scene which was conceived in the spirit of Botticelli's "Spring."

The play moved lugubriously, which I insisted was due to the lack of lighting as much as to anything else. Irving could not be reasoned with. He had, at this period of his career, become infected with the New Art, and feared above all to be considered a victim of the old régime and its influences. It is always dangerous when an elderly man overthrows his traditions and makes a dash toward tolerance and license.

During these rehearsals, I further discovered that Irving would never stand in the dark himself, nor speak from the shadow.

I proved this fact by often drawing his attention to his understudy who, at that particular moment, was in obscurity.

Immediately Irving would call to him and to the spotlight man to be more careful. They were rehearsed to be inseparable. It was an amusing insight into character, which I have never forgotten.

Henry Irving was nothing of a musician, which I observed when Xavier Leroux came over from Paris with his score. It was he who had been selected to write the incidental music of these Sardou-Moreau productions. When cuts were found necessary in the manuscript, Irving could never understand why in the world Leroux should not blue-pencil his orchestral score in the same way. He insisted that when dialogue was shortened, the corresponding bars of music should be also taken out.

We all had many futile arguments with him on the subject, with the result that Leroux returned to Paris, a very disgruntled and disappointed composer.

On one memorable occasion I enjoyed my brief moment of

importance with Irving. There were some legal difficulties covering "Madame Sans-Gêne," by Sardou, the English rights of which he had purchased. I knew every detail of the case as I had studied it carefully; besides, I was fairly familiar with the questions concerning international copyrights, plagiarisms and piracies.

Sir George Lewis was then the great lawyer of the members of the theatrical profession.

He was their rock of strength and acted proverbially as their mentor in personal as well as in public affairs.

Irving, who had retained the services of Lewis in this particular contention, took me with him to the latter's office. I found Sir George extremely well-dressed, alert and courteous. He had a searching expression and a direct attack. His personality suggested a man who was a thorough master of himself and to whom all the world was a stage with the people merely its puppets. The eminent barrister, at Irving's suggestion, asked me to relate the facts as I had gathered them. I stated concisely and clearly each point of the argument, explaining much that was confused and giving evidence of much that helped to clarify.

When I had finished my summing up, Sir George Lewis turned to Irving and said, "Instead of employing me to prepare your brief, I strongly advise you to engage Miss Marbury, for I am convinced that even without my aid she can win our case in any court in the Empire."

Naturally I flushed with pride—but afterward thought of the many mornings when I, as a young girl, had sat in my father's office at 64, Wall Street, reading Blackstone's "Commentaries" and studying case after case in the leather-bound law books which stood along his shelves. My training had been thorough, and my legal mind was a direct inheritance.

It is with confessed timidity that I approach my early acquaintance with G. Bernard Shaw. The first time my eyes ever fell upon him was at the Criterion Theatre. He wore a soft flannel shirt. I was told who he was and that his cult for

socialism made him opposed to starched linen and other conventionalities. He was then just beginning to write for the stage, and was far from being rich in worldly goods at the time when he entrusted his American interests to me.

After the success of Richard Mansfield's performance in the "Devil's Disciple," which success was duplicated in "Arms and the Man," I began to send drafts to Shaw as a result.

It was not very long before I received an amusing letter from him which began, "Rapacious Elisabeth Marbury: As you persist in asking these large terms from American managers, and as you persist in sending me fat cheques, I am compelled to do a thing utterly abhorrent to me, namely, open a bank account."

The two plays above mentioned were followed by "You Never Can Tell," "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," "John Bull's Other Island," "Fanny's First Play," "Candida," "Cæsar and Cleopatra," "Man and Superman," "Major Barbara," "The Man of Destiny," "How He Lied to Her Husband," "Getting Married." &c.

The Shaw drama was established. His success as a playwright was beyond dispute. Even the intellectual snobs could not kill it. An occasional manager, like an occasional listener, would complain of the long stretches of involved dialogue. A few were honest enough then, as now, to confess that they couldn't discover whether Shaw was being funny to please himself or funny to confuse others.

However, this very query proved a good box-office asset, so that there is always to be found an eager public for any play Bernard Shaw writes, no matter what he writes or how he writes it, and the early habit which he acquired of indulging in a bank account has become chronic. He could not avoid his fate.

Shaw, as everyone knows, is a vegetarian, but no one can lunch or dine at a table more replete with delicious food than at his house in Adelphi Terrace. Vegetables and cereals, as there prepared for the great author, are succulent and tempting. The menus would have delighted Brillat-Savarin. Each course

is more delicate and appetising than its predecessor, and personally I always felt that I gained pounds every time I enjoyed his hospitality.

I cannot refer, however, to this home without expressing an ardent admiration for Mrs. Bernard Shaw, who was a widow when Shaw married her. A more charming and gracious lady it would be difficult to find. She is so extremely intelligent that at first this is not a too obvious fact. I often wonder whether she has ever allowed her brilliant husband to discover it. Under her influence, Shaw no longer eschewed linen shirts and stiff collars. He no longer refused to own a motor-car, and he no longer believed that Felix Holt would have been less radical had he consented to wear a necktie.

Socialism is an inspiring theme for either the pen or the platform but, like the Eighteenth Amendment, it seems to be recommended with more enthusiasm for one's neighbour than for oneself.

One of the most successful of Shaw's early plays was "You Never Can Tell." I had arrived in London shortly after its production, and was walking down the Strand toward the theatre where it was being given. Near the Charing Cross Hospital, I met the author, who greeted me with a pleasant friendliness and asked whither I was bound. "To see your play," I replied. "Foolish Elisabeth," he answered, "your afternoon will be wasted. No one will buy a play in which the opening scene takes place in a dentist's surgery and having the hero a dentist."

"If he is a skilled operator who doesn't charge too much, the play might be produced as propaganda against extortion," I replied.

I need not dwell upon the real fare of this comedy. Liebler and Company were the managers who risked its production before the American public, and were well rewarded for their courage.

One of the best critics in London at this period was Clement Scott. He was called the "Sarcey of England."

He and William Archer were the two men whose favourable opinions were the most anxiously coveted.

Scott was a delightful companion, bubbling over with humour. He was a loud advocate of the Catholic Church, to which he belonged. He never allowed the fact of his faith to be lost sight of, so far as it could be emphasised in speech.

On one occasion after attending a *matinée* at Brighton, and reaching London as late as nine o'clock, this being a Friday, he hastened to Simpson's in the Strand where fish dinners were a speciality.

Falling listlessly into a chair, and loathing fish as only Catholics can loathe it, he called the waiter and murmured, "Serve the regular Friday dinner," whereas the man apologetically informed him that they were out of fish, owing to the lateness of the hour.

Scott gleefully shouted, "Then bring me a fat, juicy steak." But raising his eyes piously toward heaven, he exclaimed, "God knows, I asked for fish."

There was never any doubt as to the truth of this anecdote as it was so entirely characteristic of Clement Scott.

CHAPTER XVI

It was through the production of the Shaw plays that I was thrown intimately into the company of Richard Mansfield, one of the greatest geniuses I have ever known. He was always a law unto himself, both in and out of the theatre. He was intellectually brilliant and proverbially irresponsible. His moods were his governing forces.

He refused to be disturbed by financial anxieties. No man believed more than did Mansfield in the advantage of letting the other fellow worry.

One of my earliest recollections of him was before he was married, and when he lived in an apartment opposite Delmonico's on Twenty-sixth Street, near Fifth Avenue.

Royalties had been long overdue, and I went by appointment to see whether I could coax him to make some settlement.

He received me wearing the most wonderful yellow satin brocade dressing-gown, lined with a costly mink fur. On his feet were a pair of richly-embroidered Oriental slippers.

His manners on such occasions were courtly and impressive. Hardly had I been seated when there came a knock at his door. This second visitor was the agent of the apartment house who had come to collect the long-delayed rent. Mansfield, looking at him as though he were a worm, said: "You consider that I owe you rent. A preposterous idea! Cannot you and those you come from realise that it is I, Richard Mansfield, whose mere presence in this house has filled it to overflowing, and thus raised the price of these apartments? I have brought the owners fortune and fame, and should be paid by them rather than that I should pay to them."

The agent, needless to say, retired with profuse apologies.

I found him so magnificent on this occasion that I never pressed my own claim. In fact, it often seemed disgraceful to ask Mansfield to pay one for anything. I preferred to have our differences settled in court. I could not bear to introduce into our personal relations such a sordid theme as finance. However, I had begun a suit over "Cyrano de Bergerac," sailing for Europe only after the papers had been served on Mansfield. But when I boarded the steamer, I found a gigantic box of roses in my cabin, with his card and an affectionate message of God-speed.

I often thought that no one I had ever met could owe money so gracefully as did Mansfield.

The circumstances under which he acquired the rights to produce "Cyrano" were unusual.

Edmond Rostand, its author, had published the text in France without observing the formalities of copyright in this country, for at that time the law required that every play should be simultaneously printed here, set up with American type by American printers in order to be eligible for American copyright.

Therefore, technically speaking, the play was public property. Not so, however, as regards the stage instructions, which were confined to the prompt copy.

Mansfield wished to produce the play, and was willing to pay a straight 5 per cent. on all gross receipts, provided that Rostand would furnish him with scenic and costume models, and with the complete stage business and directions.

Thus the agreement was made, and thus I gained further reputation among the French authors.

Rostand loudly sung my praises, because he had been informed he could expect no protection for his property in America, whereas he received from Richard Mansfield, during the life of this famous play, many thousands of dollars in royalties.

Edmond Rostand was a very fine lyric poet. He stood

practically without a rival, and the talent evinced by his only son, Maurice, is a direct inheritance.

Rostand was never physically strong. His nerves were his torment. He suffered constantly from insomnia. For this reason the last years of his life were spent in the South of France, at Cambo, as far removed as possible from the boulevards of Paris.

The rehearsals of his plays were most exhausting to him. Fortunately he was not a prolific writer, for his salvation were the long periods of rest between each production.

He was one of the most distinguished men in appearance I have ever seen. His diction was delightful. Rostand was the quintessence of dignity and of refinement.

His poetry and his personality seemed in complete harmony.

"L'Aiglon," in my opinion, was his masterpiece. I recall the deep impression it made when I first received the manuscript and enjoyed the initial reading of the text. It seemed to me as graceful as the Gothic lace-work in stone which stretches across the front of the cathedral at Rouen.

Perhaps the greatest value conferred by Napoleon upon art was through the inspiration of this drama revolving around the imperial bee, the fragrant violet and the touching story of his little son.

CHAPTER XVII

DURING many years the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel seemed to me like ferries as I crossed them so frequently. They became a habit. Much time was always spent on the other side, and subsequent to my childhood it was not until the year 1915 that I ever knew how my own country looked during the summer months.

The selection of Versailles as a permanent residence came about in an unexpected fashion, and no one was more surprised than Miss de Wolfe and myself when we finally became property owners in France.

We happened one day to meet Minna, Dowager Marchioness of Anglesey, at the house of a mutual friend in Paris. She kindly invited us to Versailles, where she had been living for many years. At that time we were at a French pension in the Avenue Hoche, kept by the wife of an ex-professor of some rural college. We were fairly comfortable there, and after all it was an experience.

Some extremely nice compatriots were fellow-lodgers, and among them were Mrs. Robert Underwood Johnson and her daughter, who were there awaiting the arrival of their son and brother, Owen, a lad of sixteen, who had been bicycling on the continent. I remember him so well when he literally dashed up to the door on his wheel. He was redolent of health and of enthusiasm. How little did I think, when I thus saw him twenty-eight years ago, that he was to achieve eminence as one of our best and most popular writers. I must confess, however, that in appearance he was not unlike many of his juvenile heroes.

We found Versailles most attractive, and a sincere friendship grew up between Lady Anglesey and ourselves which led to our renting a little pavilion of hers which adjoined her lovely villa. There we settled down. It was simple and required a very small contingent of servants. The expense to run it was trifling. Prices then had not soared to their present proportions.

One advantage was that we were thrown almost at once into a delightful society of thoughtful men and women. We ourselves began to entertain in a modest but agreeable fashion. Of course at times we had the usual contretemps of young housekeepers.

I remember on one occasion when we expected some distinguished guests that a neighbour urged us to accept for the evening the services of her footman.

Our chief dish, a specialty of our cook's, was a mousse of *pâté de foie gras*. We had advised our friends of it so that they might enjoy the pleasure of anticipation. At the given moment of its appearance, the door of our tiny dining-room was opened, the borrowed attendant, resplendent in livery, stumbled, fell, and the mousse was splashed all over the floor. For a few seconds we were overwhelmed by this tragedy, then our sense of humour came to our rescue. We laughed, and Jean Richepin, the poet, who was at the table, exclaimed : "It is thus that we are spared indigestion !" Let me add that this was the first and last time when our hospitality was bedecked in the borrowed plumage of a neighbour's grandeur.

This little pavilion stood contiguous to the famous historical property known as the Ermitage, the retreat of Madame de Pompadour, when she no longer disputed her ascendancy over Louis XV. It was from here that the magnificent porphyry bath-tub, cut out of one solid piece, was removed to the Avenue de Neuilly to adorn the charming garden of Robert, Comte de Montesquieu Fezensac.

At this time the Ermitage, with all its contents, belonged to a religious community. It had been theirs since the Revolution.

When the idea of parting with the bath-tub was first presented to them by de Montesquieu's secretary, the Mother Superior of the convent refused absolutely to sell this treasure, not that the dear lady had any conception of its value, but because on general principles she did not wish to yield any of their possessions. Several visits were paid but without success, when suddenly the persistent buyer returned, this time incidentally, with a roll of bank-notes and with a pair of frayed embroidered slippers carefully wrapped in white tissue paper.

Reverently he undid the little package and in a tone of respect, mingled with awe, he said: "Reverend Mother, see what I have brought you, a pair of satin slippers which were once worn by our great Holiness, Pope Pius IX. Note the beautiful papal arms stitched in gold thread upon the vamps."

Trembling with emotion the credulous lady took the slippers into her hands. She turned them over with admiration. At the same time the bank-notes, amounting to some four thousand francs, were placed upon the desk.

It was a moment of temptation, but the Pope's slippers proved the disarming influence. Were they not literally shod with sanctity?

The shepherdess of her flock yielded at last. The bargain was closed and the exchange was consummated. Within an hour this superb object of art was hoisted upon a truck and rolled away. I understood that its actual value as appraised by experts was 25,000 francs. Who could ever have imagined that a Pope's slippers would be bartered for a courtesan's bath-tub?

In those days Lady Anglesey entertained delightfully. She was, as I have said, an American by birth, but married twice in England; the first time to Mr. Henry Wodehouse, who died, and finally to her second husband, the Marquis of Anglesey,

She was amazingly pretty, with a style wholly her own. Hers was an effervescent brain. Some witty Frenchmen described her as always agitating and agitated. She was and

is a brilliant woman. She does not temporise with convictions, and certainly has never failed in courage once she has decided upon the righteousness of the cause she espouses. In the Dreyfus affair she was so definitely outspoken against his enemies that she was deserted by many of her reactionary friends.

At the same time when Miss de Wolfe and I first became habitués of her circle, there were few drawing-rooms so agreeable. Her house was permeated by her personality, which was attractive and most interesting. In recent years she has lived almost entirely in the French provinces. Her dread of the ocean has prevented her from ever returning to the land of her birth.

Before many seasons were over we removed from this little house in Versailles to one rather more commodious. This property was near the Porte St. Antoine, and practically adjoining the larger place which we afterwards purchased. Our new landlady was also an American, the widow of an artist, Charles Morgan. It was most deceptive in size, and built somewhat like an English cottage. Before the front door there was merely a courtyard, but in the rear was a large English garden which gave directly on the park of Versailles. The furniture was simple yet attractive, and both Miss de Wolfe and I were thoroughly pleased with our new quarters. We were, however, forced to leave there finally, as Mrs. Morgan, who had invited a niece to join her, decided to return to Versailles. But their enjoyment in this quaint property was short-lived, because, much to the surprise of their friends, both ladies, one after the other, decided to give up the world and to join religious communities, which they did in England. The niece died a professed nun. The aunt, I believe, is still alive, a member of an enclosed order. No one who knew these ladies has ever quite understood the influence which determined their choice of vocation.

CHAPTER XVIII

LADY ANGLESEY'S was by no means the only salon which became a storm centre during the Dreyfus trial. The most amazing feature of this case was that the men who were his ardent champions, and who devoted their money and time to effect his liberation, were nearly all strangers to Dreyfus. They were frequent visitors at our house. Joseph Reinach, Sardou, Cornely and a dozen others who defended him never laid eyes upon Dreyfus until he returned for his re-examination at Rennes.

At the time feeling ran so high that those who were on his side flatly formulated that for them all honest men were Dreyfusards, whereas all who were anti-Dreyfus were dishonest. As years went by, and as the facts of this astounding miscarriage of justice became better known, it was found that people could remain honest without believing that Dreyfus was wholly innocent.

Politics played too large a part in this extraordinary trial in which race and religion were such potent factors, so that even now we may be too near the time of its occurrence to regard it with an impartial and unbiased judgment. That Dreyfus had an unsympathetic and even repellent personality was generally admitted. At those crucial moments when he should have been eloquent he was disastrously furtive, his speech dry. There was nothing about him which was appealing. The sympathy aroused by the cruel severity of his punishment was cerebral rather than personal. When he appeared before the tribunal at Rennes, hundreds flocked there hoping that he would be compelling in his own defence. He had been so long an exile, his sufferings had been so intense, his martyrdom

so poignant, that those present felt that at last when he did speak that they would be rocked by their emotions, for this was the opportunity he had craved, this was the hearing which he had demanded. Thousands in the nation had asked that Dreyfus should be given the opportunity to tell his story before an impartial bar of justice, so that at least his voice would be heard and the truth become revealed.

Constant Coquelin, that great actor of the Comédie Française, was one of our warm personal friends. He had gone to Rennes, and from there had wired asking whether he might dine with us *en route* to Paris.

I shall never forget his description of the scene he had left. From an actor's standpoint Dreyfus had proved a miserable failure. His speech in his own advocacy didn't "get over." Legally it scored, but emotionally it failed. I can remember Coquelin impersonating Dreyfus for our benefit, and showing us how he, had he been in his stead, would have swayed the audience with laughter and above all with tears, how he would have led up to his climaxes, how he would have visualised each step of his way to that Calvary where he had endured crucifixion during so many cruel months.

"But," cried Coquelin, "he gave us nothing, he stood before us blind to his great moment. He seemed to us no more than a gentleman who had been robbed of his pig by a neighbour, instead of the victim of a nation which had singled him out as the scapegoat of a political conspiracy."

Associated with the trial was a mysterious lady in white, who secretly made the nightly trip to Paris, furnishing the *Figaro* with the inside information. Every precaution was taken by the police to prevent the appearance of these daily articles which were forbidden by the Government censorship. Nevertheless, every morning saw a full column giving the most minute details of all that had transpired at Rennes. In after years, the secret leaked out, until it was generally admitted that Madame Fred de Gresac, the author of "The Marriage of Kitty," "Orange Blossoms," and many other sparkling

comedies, was the *Figaro* correspondent so eagerly sought for during the trial of this celebrated case.

The name of Coquelin reminds me of a story connected with his first tour in this country.

Lillian Russell was at the zenith of her beauty and playing an engagement at Wallack's Theatre, on the corner of Broadway and Thirtieth Street. Coquelin had heard of her charm, and had studied her photographs. He was most anxious to make her acquaintance, and with this end in view sought the kind offices of a mutual friend.

An appointment was duly made, and it was arranged that upon a certain evening after her performance the gentlemen were to present themselves in the actress's dressing-room and escort her to Delmonico's for supper.

Immaculately turned out, Coquelin and his friend drove up to the theatre. They were at once made conscious of some undue excitement. There was an atmosphere of hilarity which was unusual. Arriving in the room, they found flowers, champagne, and a dark-eyed young man who was sharing congratulations with the prima donna. Hardly had Coquelin been introduced before the announcement was made that the young man in question was the tenor, Signor Perugini, who had that very evening persuaded the fair Lillian to be his affianced bride.

As Coquelin and his friend left the theatre to eat their supper alone, the former remarked with a cynical lifting of his eyebrows: "What fools men are to marry women who are fools enough to marry them."

Coquelin died with his life's dream unfulfilled. The long line of his stage triumphs was incomplete, for he had always insisted that, given the opportunity, he would have proved himself the finest Romeo of his country.

He knew every line of the rôle, and was never reconciled to that inexorable fate which prevented the world from realising that he could be the greatest lover in the history of the stage.

His Cyrano de Bergerac never compensated him for the loss of Romeo of Mantua.

CHAPTER XIX

How many must recall with a shudder that awful disaster in Paris, when 130 persons lost their lives in the fearful fire which destroyed the Bazaar de la Charité. Like similar entertainments prepared in the interest of some worthy cause, the general style of decoration consisted of a display of inflammable material. Flags, banners, shields, paper festoons and flowers were in evidence. The booths lining the long room at the head of a wooden staircase were constructed with light lathes and stucco, which could easily be ignited. It was during the afternoon hours, when the place was packed, that this holocaust occurred. The room was full to overflowing with fashionable patrons, the greater part representing the exclusive society of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Suddenly a cigarette, carelessly thrown in a corner amid a heap of rubbish, started the conflagration. The curling flames were detected, panic ensued. Men, women and children beat their way in terror to the doors, they were trampled under foot, walking sticks and parasols lashed the air, screams and curses resounded as the mad crowd rushed on. Fortunately the back windows gave upon the Cours la Reine, so that some escaped into the courtyards of the rear dwellings.

Among those lost was the Duchesse D'Alençon, sister of the ill-fated Empress of Austria, and a member of that family which for many generations has been associated with the historical tragedies of Europe. To-day, in the Royal Chapel at Dreux, this victim of the Bazaar de la Charité is seen carved in marble and stretched upon her tomb, with feet and hands

drawn up in agony, to eternally remind the world of her death, which was so horrible in its struggle and in its suffering,

It was at this time that I became acquainted with Comte Robert de Montesquiou, a direct descendant of that chivalrous D'Artagnan made famous by the elder Dumas.

No one has ever written better verses than this poet. They were as aristocratic in form as though penned with the steel of his picturesque ancestor.

Their wit was caustic, their beauty was all pervading.

His prose, while of excellent quality, could never rival his poetry. For many years he was a prolific writer, and those with whom he did not enjoy popularity waited with fear the appearance of each new volume, for they knew full well that one line of satire from de Montesquiou's pen would make them the target of ridicule in every salon of Paris. Nor did he ever restrain his venom, which in a few polished phrases wounded with no gentle skill. He was a distinct personality at the time of which I write. His Pavillon des Muses at Neuilly, and later his Pavillon des Roses at Le Pecq, drew together the wits of that most worldly of all societies; artists from every profession were conspicuous. Cecile Sorel was then at the height of her beauty, and she was rarely absent from these gatherings. I recall that on one occasion I counted as present 26 members of the French Academy.

The host himself, always surrounded by a group of faithful satellites, moved from room to room dispensing a graceful hospitality.

It was literally a feast of reason, for the actual entertainment was of the most frugal description.

Montesquiou's poverty was a proverbially acute condition with him, and had it not been for his devoted henchman, Gabriel D'Yturri, I fear that he would have been frequently overtaken by dire distress. As it was, his house was so animated by beauty and so replete with anecdote that one was rarely reminded of any vacuum caused by a depleted exchequer.

His subsequent lecture tour in America was under my

auspices. He came richly supplied with powerful letters of introduction, but a prejudice of unusual proportion existed against him, fanned to activity by his enemies abroad. I am happy to state, however, that despite this fact these conferences were a pronounced success. It was a clear case of those who went to scoff remaining to pray. Rarely have any lectures in the French language proved more delightful.

The room was always crowded and the audience sincerely appreciative.

Many were the amusing comments made by Montesquiou upon American social habits. He could never grasp the psychology of a luncheon at which no men were present. He could not understand business as a controlling force.

To go to a social function, to be asked to mount the stairs and to have one's hat and coat laid upon a bed, which was the common fashion in those days, was something abhorrent and unsanitary.

Goloshes piled around a priceless console table in a hall was a custom which seemed to him as incongruous as it was indecorous. On the other hand he revelled in the press and enjoyed its publicity.

One of his most precious souvenirs was the scrap-book which I had carefully prepared for him and which contained columns both of description and of criticism. I believe that this compilation alone would have compensated him for the journey across the Atlantic.

Robert de Montesquiou during the war took little active interest in its performance. Its victories were hardly more emphasised to him than were its defeats.

He detached himself completely from the vibration of the boulevards and buried himself in his Louis XIII. château in the South of France.

On one occasion during this period I offered him his favourite white carnation as a boutonnière. He gracefully waved away my gift, saying: "Ah, dear friend, while the war lasts I shall never wear a flower. That is the sacrifice which I make

to my country." The egotism of this seemed to me sublime.

It was at the Pavillon des Muses that I met Gabriel D'Annunzio as a man of letters; the hero of Fiume had still to be revealed. The Russian Ballet had just burst upon Paris in all its pristine glory. The Blue God walked upon the streets, while Ida Rubenstein had become the presiding goddess. The name of Leon Bakst was upon the lips of everyone. Brilliant and blatant, sensuous and scintillating, crushing and clashing, mighty and mysterious, immoral and immortal was this new form of entertainment, which in its journey across Central Europe had gathered impetus and inspiration. It was the era in which the Dance of Death reigned supreme.

A wild debauchery of mind prevailed. Everything seemed distorted. The spirit of unrest, the soul in distress, the whole morale of mankind perverted, were the signals which flashed their searchlights ahead, revealing the approaching confluence with a river of blood.

D'Annunzio with his lyrics created harmony even out of this discord. It is true that he struck the cymbals of his century, but as his background stood that figure of classic romanticism, silent and immutable, Eleanora Duse, the artist whose attachment to him was made the common property of the world only through D'Annunzio's novel, "El Fuoco," which should have been one of consecration and not one of desecration. In looking from behind the bars of his soul the stars escaped his vision and the splashes of mud fell upon his pages as he wrote.

But like many others his after achievements as a patriot made the world forget his mistakes as a man.

CHAPTER XX

THE traditions of the French Academy were being frequently attacked, and even though Emilé Zola had knocked in vain at its portals, the latter was nevertheless threatened by an invasion of new and ruthless minds. Modernism was rampant, and the chairs of the immortal forty were disputed by destructive forces.

I owe to Sardou my first opportunity to attend a symposium within those sacred precincts. It was on the occasion when de Heredia took his seat. His sponsor was François Coppet.

All along the Quai as one approached the Institute one felt a thrill of excitement. The intellectuals of France were in the ascendant. Every celebrity was in evidence. The chamber in which the function takes place on these occasions is comparatively small. The cards of admission represent the different sections. The seats are arranged in rows of uncomfortable benches towering one upon the other. The floor is filled with the rostrum and the Fauteuils of the Academicians. There is practically no ventilation whatever, and all the light is furnished by a glass roof, which on a sunny day makes the heat almost unbearable.

After my first visit I was present at several other sessions, notably the reception of the well-known novelist Paul Bourget, when the Vicomte E. M. de Vogué made the speech of presentation.

There are always two important discourses. One of introduction made by a carefully selected sponsor, and one by the new member, who replies in terms that might almost be a profession of faith.

The world owes an eternal gratitude to this august assembly of scholars, for while the literary Bolsheviks of France jeer and satirise this group of men, nevertheless they always have been and always will be the defenders of the classic school of form which they represent. They are the keepers of the holy seal of taste, of accuracy and of discretion. They are not easily wooed nor are they casually won. Their standards are inviolate and to be respected, and no facile and sporadic talent shall prevail against them.

The French Academy, like fashionable society, is theoretically spurned by those to whom entrance therein is denied ; nevertheless, let these contemptuous critics be given the slightest hope of admission and they will forthwith become sycophantic in their admiration and truculent in their expressions of esteem.

It is a well-known fact that no influence so quickly converts a radical into a reactionary as does his election to power.

I could never quite understand why any writer of comedy should aspire to becoming a member of this very austere body. The atmosphere it exudes is traditionally against the spirit of mirth. Everything savours so intensely of serious responsibility that levity of any kind seems sadly out of place.

One interesting feature is that when in broad daylight the Academicians don their historical costume, consisting of a cocked hat and a coat embroidered in gold palms, this is not viewed as an absurdity. It is a part of the traditions which no one would be courageous enough to criticise.

But when this same costume is displayed for sale in some pawnshop window in the Rue de Provence, or worn in a London drawing-room, as was the case whenever Jules Claretie crossed the channel, then the grotesqueness of this literary livery becomes apparent.

Jules Claretie personally was a gentle and attractive soul in Parisian society. While administrator of the Théâtre Français this very pliability, however, was a crime. He disliked so especially to seem ungracious that he agreed to

everything and agreed with everybody. It pained him to say "no." Thus, each author whose play was under consideration often lived for months in a fool's paradise unmindful of the day when his manuscript might be returned with a letter of sympathetic regret. And when an excellent part was to be distributed it was invariably found that this same part had been promised to each member of the company who had privately been an applicant for it.

Nevertheless, Claretie remained in power for many years. His charm was felt even by those who warred against it. His was the soul of hospitality, and to sit at his table was a joy, as he gathered there most gifted and agreeable guests. The place of honour, however, was always reserved for his very aged grandmother, who delighted the visitors with her personal recollections of Louis the Sixteenth and of Marie Antoinette. At first glance this did not seem possible, yet the dear old lady could prove the accuracy of her chronology without the slightest difficulty.

Another dominant figure was Jean Richepin, famous as a lyric dramatist and writer of verse, but above all for his still rarer mind and personal charm.

Many were the tales told of his conquests of the fair sex, which culminated, however, through his elopement with the beautiful wife of a composer, a lady whom he subsequently married owing to the liberation resultant from a dual divorce, for Richepin was also married at the time.

Madame Richepin the second was an irregular descendant of Alexander of Russia, and quite one of the most lovely women I have ever seen. Running true to form, Richepin, who could have passed anywhere as a Bedouin chief, dragged Madame away from the civilisation of Paris, crossed the Mediterranean, landed in Algiers, and then headed for the desert, where they lived for months in tents or on the backs of Arabian horses. Thus they wandered together, recognising no laws but those of Richepin's own creation.

However, Richepin's talent seems to have been stimulated

by this great experience, although he had already given to the world that most beautiful drama, "Le Chemineau," which became popular in every language.

All this transpired many years ago, and the children of this union have inherited the beauty and the grace of their mother, as well as the artistic soul and the literary talent of their father.

By his contemporaries Jean Richepin was invariably referred to as the "fatal man," for it was proverbially believed that no woman could resist him.

Another member of the French Academy was Paul Hervieu, who always gave one the impression of chronic despondency, yet he too possessed a rare attraction for our sex. For years he had become the habit in a certain household presided over by an aristocratic and titled châtelaine.

There Hervieu was petted and considered to an incredible extent. There his every wish was anticipated, his every taste gratified.

But once, in the latter years of his life, he developed the wandering eye which led him temporarily afield.

There was, however, no real rupture so far as his adopted home was concerned, for lady number one, instead of overwhelming Hervieu with tears, reproaches and complaints due to his recurrent absences, welcomed lady number two to her own attractive and luxurious villa. For months Hervieu was never invited there without her, nor was he ever allowed to enjoy any relief from her society, which at best was fairly dull. He was forbidden to relax in the charming and tactful society of lady number one until at last he could simply bear it no longer. He became bored beyond endurance. Lady number two was thrown over and Hervieu crept back to the quiet haven which he had temporarily deserted for a foolish sail upon a summer sea.

I watched the going and coming, and was deeply impressed by the finesse of this very clever Frenchwoman, who proved herself a past mistress in the art of having and of holding.

Henri Lavedan, author of the "Duel" and many other successful plays, is another member of the French Academy whose work I personally represented in English-speaking countries.

He suffers from the great affliction of incurable deafness, and I remember that once when he spoke with resignation of the crushing noise which was grinding in his head during his waking hours, I felt a sympathy for him beyond utterance. Yet I never knew Henri Lavedan to complain of this burden which he has carried through life. He is a man of unusual taste and culture, and surrounds himself with objects of beauty so that he can at least live through his eyes, even though his ears are closed.

To spend an hour with him is a lesson in character. It dwarfs one's puerile complaints and belittles one's trivial burdens. It teaches that in the mystery of pain is the secret of life, and that within a man's soul can be found the real inspiration which insures his achievement. To know Henri Lavedan is indeed a privilege.

As I turn my crystal ball, I see a long line of men and women of note defiling across my memory : Georges Feydeau, whose blood relation to an imperial duke was regarded as a source of pride rather than as a blot on his escutcheon. When comparatively young he married the daughter of Cabanel, the artist. His talent as a writer of jovial farce was unequalled. He was the soul of geniality, and the laughs he produced were but the echoes of his own impulses. He was one of the first collectors who bought modern pictures, and the famous School of Fontainebleau furnished his walls with many of the best paintings by Diaz, Corot, Rousseau and Millet.

Feydeau would have died a very rich man had it not been that he was always a heavy speculator in the stock market.

At the end, as is generally the case, he was beaten by the "ticker." Its constant click lured him on until, when the day of reckoning came, his heavy assets in brains were discounted by his losses in shares and securities.

CHAPTER XXI

THE list of men who contributed to the glory of the French stage in those days would be incomplete without mentioning Pierre Decourcelle, the nephew of d'Ennery, who was the author of the "Two Orphans." Although successful as a dramatist, he has devoted himself in later years to the making of moving pictures, so that he is now pre-eminent in the world of films.

Decourcelle was and still is a very handsome man. He is a familiar figure everywhere ; not only in the theatre, but at every private art view in the Rue de Seize ; at the Hôtel Drouot when important auction sales are in progress ; at Longchamps on the day of the Grand Prix, at Auteuil ; in Deauville when the season is at its height ; in the most exclusive salons of Paris, in fact Pierre Decourcelle is in all and over all.

He is noted for his marvellous taste, for his knowledge as a collector, for his own overwhelming energy, and for his universal courtliness.

Another turn of my ball, and I recognise such a master of style, and such an interpreter of emotions, as Maurice Donnay. He in his turn is followed by Tristan Bernard, Pierre Wolf, Pierre Weber, Gaston Caillavet, Maurice Hennequin, Henry Bernstein, Brioux, Curel, Robert de Flers, Francis de Croisset and a score of others, some of whom have passed beyond. Many of the dramatists I have known were amongst the early victims of the war.

Probably Henry Bernstein, whose mother was an American and a Seligman, never wrote better drama during the whole of

his brilliant career, than in that supreme moment when he enacted it on the day of that sensational trial when Madame Joseph Caillaux stood charged with the murder of a great journalist, and when her husband, appearing in her defence, was denounced as the influence of her crime.

The rumblings of war were heard even in the Council Chamber. Jules Jaurès, the socialist leader, had been assassinated.

The whole world had become charged with electric currents which for the moment were uncontrolled by any switchboard.

Joseph Caillaux, one of the greatest statesmen in France, stood before the bar accused of high treason. It had been sworn that he had sold his country to a pack of German wolves, for which foul deed the traditional 30 pieces of silver had fallen into his hand.

To all of which Caillaux had replied with a sweeping denunciation of the entire semitic race, accusing them in turn of cowardice, of disloyalty, of denationalism, and of such despicable qualities of character as would debar him, a Frenchman, a gentleman and a patriot, of ever consorting with them directly or indirectly in any way or at any time.

His eloquence was so compelling that the audience seemed fairly swept away. The Caillaux verdict was hanging in the balance, when suddenly there was great confusion in the gallery. A young man with wild and flashing eyes, handsome and intense, and of a deathly pallor was forcing his way through the dense crowd.

At last reaching the front row, while throwing back his head with a gesture of defiance, and in a voice that was clear and strident, he cried out :

"I demand the right of speech," to which request after the custom in a French court of justice, the judge replied :

"Speech is granted to Henry Bernstein," for the man who had asked for the right of a hearing, he had recognised as none other than the celebrated dramatist, author of "The Thief," "Israel," "The Secret," and of many other splendid plays.

A masterpiece of oratory then fell upon the ears of the startled audience.

It embodied the defence of his race coupled with an assurance of his own willingness to be the first to die for his beloved country. As a slur, he insisted that never would he conceal himself behind the skirts of any woman, even were she his own wife !

Each sentence was a staccato of brilliant phrases. Each word was like a spatter of shot upon the head of the man he had gone there to slay. At last, in a climax never to be forgotten, Bernstein, leaning far over the rail and looking at Caillaux, who was just below, pointed at him with a finger of scathing scorn and hissed out the words :

“ Are you there, Caillaux ? ”

The effect was stupendous. The crowd leapt upon its feet, the applause was deafening. The orator had become the hero. He was literally carried out upon the shoulders of his admirers. Paris rang with the report of his triumph. It was Bernstein's victory and Caillaux's defeat.

In France, as elsewhere, the destructive force of so-called realism has penetrated. It has advanced hand in hand with cubist art. It shares with the latter a lack of form and of logic ; it ignores dramatic values and spurns dramatic plots. Simplicity becomes an offence. Any understanding of the story is interpreted as its weakness.

Romance and beauty are discarded. The normal struggles of normal humanity are despised. They are replaced by distorted themes which spring from diseased minds, or which are suggested by the same morbid pruriency which gravitates to the dissecting room.

This moral miasma in literature, and in the drama, seems to have spread over the face of Europe. It is not confined to any one country. It is ubiquitous in its influence. The microbes of degeneracy were germinating prior to the Great War. Those who were healthy-minded predicted that this awful Car of Juggernaut would mow down the weeds and purify the soil.

They believed that out of the dire disaster the world would be born again. They thought that from the terrifying darkness an effulgent light would spring. They felt that the rivers of blood would wash away all evil ; that the toll of human lives would redeem the loss of human souls ; that the Holy Dove of Peace would thereafter descend upon mankind, and that the glory of God would encompass the earth.

How far away from the bitter reality was this prophecy and this belief !

Instead of love, hatred unchecked stalks in our midst. Instead of mercy, injustice. Instead of forgiveness, revenge. A lust for gold, a greed of conquest, a barrier against fear have been the dreams of the victors. The map of Europe has become the slaughter-house of the world. The tears of the weak fall unsoothed in the shambles. The wasted hands of the children are raised in a vain appeal. Men have ceased to be human. They are bathed in blood. They are corroded by selfishness.

The women who before were their ministering angels are given over to vanity and to viciousness. They have become mere physical puppets, pandering to their bodies while asphyxiating their souls.

The devil has indeed come into his own, and the prayers that once ascended into heaven are now drowned in a pan of sensuous pleasure, of revolting passion and of ruthless extravagance.

The starving and innocent victims of this lust and greed and hatred are dying unheeded by the way, yet God is marching on. The gates of hell shall not prevail against Him, and neither you nor I shall escape the handwriting on our walls, because it has been written in red and the price it has cost the world has made it indelible.

CHAPTER XXII

GRADUALLY my business assumed large proportions.

My various foreign branches were open and thriving until 1914. The London office has never been closed. My first associate there was Mr. Addison Bright, who had many very warm friends amongst the literary men of England. At his death I had the extreme good fortune of persuading his younger brother, R. Golding Bright, to replace him, so that from that time until now my English interests have been in his hands. Golding Bright will always be a young man at any age. He keeps ahead of his time. He was born a modern. His judgment as to the merit of a manuscript is rarely at fault. However, I am inclined to think that emotional enthusiasm does more to stimulate an author to endeavour than does drastic criticism. If a writer manifests only a germ of talent he should feel a glow of sympathy even as his limitations and defects are helpfully pointed out.

The common idea that the business of an authors' agent is merely an automatic function is most erroneous. The agent who is satisfied in only making contracts, in collecting fees, and in directing his office mechanically, will never rise above the level of mediocrity.

An authors' representative, to be of any real use, must have a mind that supplements what the author lacks. Added to his experience he must be permeated with an imagination which at times often exceeds that of the creator he would help. He must not wait for opportunity ; he must make it. While the author is moving slowly with his story, the intelligent agent

must, in his mind, see this same story already produced. It is he who must transfer the characters of the play to the stage. It is he who must watch them move, speak, succeed or fail. He must be familiar with the pitfalls so as to warn the author from tumbling into them. He must follow the pulse of the public with an unerring instinct ; above all he must know when to encourage his client and when to dissuade him. He must, while pointing out his defects, be able to inspire him to achievement.

A good authors' agent, one who is really worthy of the name, should indeed be a guide, a philosopher and a friend.

How many successful playwrights came to me in their youth, timidly showing me their first efforts ! Amongst them were Hubert Henry Davis, W. Somerset Maugham, Jerome K. Jerome, J. M. Barrie and Stanley Weyman. I can remember the first successes of Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, Hall Caine, Sydney Grundy and Cecil Raleigh ; then dear old Brandon Thomas, whose popular farce, "Charley's Aunt," was in my hands.

In America I can see Rachel Crothers, who had taught school in the middle-west, but who had a craving and a leaning toward all that savoured of the theatre.

She had written "Three of Us," and had brought the manuscript to me. I felt certain of its success once we could be assured a production. We tried many doors but our knocking was in vain, until finally the play was produced in the Madison Square Theatre and scored an immense success. Miss Crothers was established. I must recite one little incident which very likely she has forgotten. After a period of mutual discouragement over this play, we were walking through Thirty-ninth Street when suddenly something fluttered down from a window and fell at Rachel Crothers' feet. It was a clean and crisp dollar bill. She had at that very moment practically made up her mind to quit playwriting and to return to the schoolroom. At the sight of this money, I seized her arm and insisted that her fate was decided, that this bill was merely a forerunner of

the fortune that she was to make in this city. I felt that this was the omen of her future.

Perhaps one of my most useful qualities in my relations with authors is that I never lose faith in their potentialities once I discover in them a germ of talent. I hold on and hold them up. Rejected manuscripts, if I believed in them, have never meant the shelf to me. On the contrary, I work all the harder to prove that my judgment is right. "Nathan Hale," for instance, one of Clyde Fitch's best plays, was written for E. H. Sothorn, who threw it back on our hands. Manager after manager refused it, until finally Nat Goodwin produced it at the old Garden Theatre.

The reason given for its rejection had been its sad ending. In those days there were stupid formulas which happily, in modern times, have been proved futile and mythical, but it took many years of education before the managers parted with their now obsolete objections.

CHAPTER XXIII

It may be interesting here to relate how often the writing or the acceptance of a play hangs upon a very slight thread.

I had met J. M. Barrie in London, and both Addison Bright and I had advised him to dramatise "The Little Minister." To this he agreed, and a contract was then entered into between him and Charles Frohman. Finally the play was finished and Barrie came to New York, bringing the precious 'script with him.

He stopped at the Holland House, which was then a popular hotel. He had never at that time met Frohman personally. I had been their intermediary. On Wednesday, the day after Barrie's arrival, I called at the hotel for the play which I was to deliver to Charles Frohman. On the following Saturday the latter was to give his verdict. As this was one of my most important transactions, I naturally felt nervous when I returned early that day to learn how the manuscript had impressed Frohman.

"When I entered his office, I was greeted with his usual cordiality. "The play is all right," he said. "There is nothing the matter with it ; only it is no good for me." My heart sank. "Why, what is the trouble with it ? " I asked. "It is a man's play," replied C. F., "whereas I am looking for a play for Maude Adams. I haven't any young actor I want to star as the Little Minister."

No words can convey the chagrin I felt. My mind was set upon the acceptance and production of this property. I reflected for a few moments, and then said :

"How would you feel about it if Barrie would rewrite it, and make Lady Babbie the leading part?"

"Oh," answered C.F., "that would be fine; but I don't believe you can get him to do it."

"That is up to me," I said, and off I flew. I found Barrie waiting for me, anxious to learn Frohman's opinion. I repeated our conversation and found the author stubbornly opposed to any reconstruction of his material.

I pleaded, I coaxed, I argued. All to no avail. However, realising that time is often our best advocate, I urged that he would suspend his decision until Monday, when I would call for his final answer.

On Monday I returned to the Holland House. I found that Barrie had weakened to a very considerable extent. I pointed out that a play successfully starring Maude Adams, who at that time was nearing the height of her popularity, would bring fame and fortune to the author. This appeal had the desired effect. Barrie consented to make the necessary changes, and Frohman rejoiced at the result of my diplomacy.

"The Little Minister" was produced. It scored a triumph.

Barrie's career as a playwright was established. He became the author in chief who furnished Maude Adams for the remainder of her artistic life with her very best and most popular rôles. A long and lasting friendship between Sir James M. Barrie and the late Charles Frohman was the happy result of their first success together.

Another anecdote revolves around that wonderful humourist, Jerome K. Jerome. He had achieved popularity as a writer of fiction and a few of his comedies had attracted favourable comment in London. Still he had not reached the high-water mark of success, and I found him one spring very despondent and downhearted.

I urged him to pluck up courage and insisted that he must have many stories in his mind which could be developed into plays. I asked him to bring me some plots so that we might decide together as to which of them he had better attack.

Soon Jerome arrived in my office with six sheets of paper covered with his fine handwriting. They were numbered one to six, each representing the theme of a possible drama. The first I remember dealt with Russian Nihilism. This was before the Russians and their theatre possessed the burning interest which they do to-day. I advised against plot number one. The stories which followed presented little more to arouse my enthusiasm.

After the fifth page had been read and rejected by me, Jerome was thoroughly disgruntled while I was equally discouraged; however, the sixth remained. "What is the use of my going on?" said Jerome, "if you haven't cared for the others, you are certain not to like this one. Not a manager in the world would consider this story for a minute."

"Never mind," I said, "I might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, so go to it and read me the last."

It was the story of "The Passing of the Third Floor Back."

I jumped from my seat with glee. I threw my arms around Jerome with enthusiasm. I knew that we had struck a bonanza.

The play was finished in the autumn, but certain as I was of the value of the material, Jerome had been right so far as the difficulty of persuading a manager to produce this play was concerned.

Golding Bright, however, convinced Johnston Forbes-Robertson to at least try out the property.

His success in both England and America is the convincing proof of the correctness of our judgment.

Forbes-Robertson, who was then in a precarious financial position, made a fortune out of this play, whereas Jerome K. Jerome never before nor since registered a success that was so positive and so permanent.

"The Christian"—that wonderful play of Hall Caine's—scored through a bit of reconstruction which altered its fate and which insured its popularity. When the author completed his original version, there was no prologue. The convent was

the opening scene. I persuaded Mr. Caine to introduce Glory and John as boy and girl together, in the very beginning of the play. I felt sure that the audience would want their first impression of them to be one of sunshine and of romance.

The reception of this play in this form again proved that this suggestion was of benefit to the author.

I might add that rarely is a manuscript turned in which cannot be improved through the advice and criticism of the skilled reader and representative.

My principle has always been not to submit a play to a manager until it has been gone over and over and improved from every possible angle. Managers judge by their first impressions. They have not the patience as a rule to help the author to a successful revision of his material. This is more properly the agent's task.

If an authors' representative had merely to sit at a desk and receive a completed and perfected manuscript, the agency business would be one of ease and certainty.

As it is, however, a play is rarely placed as first written.

It is the rewriting of the play which requires all the help and the encouragement which the agent can give. And even then, when the author has patiently toiled over his manuscript, when the agent has tried with all the confidence and the persistency of which he is capable, to convince the managers of its merit, the result may be one of heartbreaking disappointment and the play may never be produced.

There is no prejudice whatever against a young and unknown writer. That is a mistaken idea. In fact, new authors have a better chance than the veterans. But the average manager is so impressed by his own ability to judge of a play that he often allows a veritable gold mine to slip through his fingers. It would be a very beneficial thing perhaps to prepare a list, not of the successful plays which were finally accepted, but of the successful plays which were primarily rejected.

Some of the very biggest hits with which I have been associated went the rounds to be returned to me over and over

again, until I found some man who had more confidence in my judgment than in his own. In face of this fact, it is interesting to note that there are still a few managers who refuse absolutely to read any manuscript which has been submitted elsewhere. It seems, indeed, fortunate that these Napoleons of the Drama have it within their power to make money out of the theatres they build so that they can be independent of the plays they reject.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE great artists of the footlights came over more frequently in those early years than now. The fact remains that as our theatre was in the process of its development we welcomed these foreign visitors as we felt we had much to learn from them.

Henry Irving and fascinating Ellen Terry were here at various times. She captivated the hearts of our people. Her magnetism was infinite. No one analysed her performances. They were accepted because she gave them. Her very defects possessed qualities which endeared her. And how piquantly pretty she was in her youth ! There was much beauty in the whole Terry family which through the Neilson Terrys has descended to the present generation.

Beerbohm Tree was here repeatedly, and during one tour I acted as his personal representative. His wife did not make the trip that year, so entrusted him to me. I always maintained that I must have been amazingly unattractive when these married ladies turned over to me the care of their husbands with so little apprehension of any sentimental danger.

There have been few men so witty and so inconsequent as Tree, yet who possessed such a knowledge of human nature, such a wealth of experience and such a shrewd sense of business.

He was mercurial on the one hand and phlegmatic on the other. His superficial moods were often misleading, for within, reason was hard at work planning and plotting for the end in view.

When he was apparently the most indifferent and careless, his mind was struggling with some problem which as a rule was

one of finance. Tree's monetary ups and downs were common property, but his luck was at the same time proverbially good. I remember that on one occasion when at a meeting of his directors and shareholders things were looking very black, and when everyone was depressed but Tree, that after indulging in some witticism he said, "Gentlemen. This is not our lucky day. We must separate until the morrow, for I see our sun rising in the eastern sky." The following morning when they assembled, Tree announced that he had just taken a delightful walk in the city, and that there fifty thousand pounds had been given him to do with as he pleased.

He made lavish productions both at the Haymarket and at His Majesty's Theatre. My friend, dear Percy Anderson, provided the designs for the costumes and gave the indications for his scenery. Anderson was a wonderful artist, and possessed an erudition which was unassailable. His taste was never questioned, and in his particular line of work he was pre-eminent.

He lived in a most attractive house where one was sure of meeting people of talent and accomplishment. A feature of it was his conservatory in the rear, where a fig tree perforated the roof. The lower branches extended over the guests while sipping their coffee and liqueurs. The effect was most picturesque and unusual.

But to return to Tree. His leading ladies were rarely permanent. His admiration of women was spontaneous and boyish, frank in its expression and ingenuous in its avowal. He was never so happy as when plunged into one of these genial intrigues.

For the time being they became his breath of life. He danced through each experience, yet there was never a moment when his sense of humour deserted him.

I was dining one night with friends at the Bath Club when suddenly at eight o'clock, with our meal just begun, Tree dashed into the room demanding that I should go at once with him to his theatre. I refused with decision. He pleaded with

my hostess, whom he knew, described with distressing emphasis an urgent matter of business which required my presence ; finally Tree scored a victory, and I was carried off. Once in the hansom which awaited outside, I turned to him and inquired eagerly as to the nature of this disrupting urgency. He began to laugh, and admitted that there was one reason only which made him throw himself upon my good nature as a friend. He confessed to having been philandering the entire afternoon with an attractive lady for whom his admiration was outspoken. He had just left her at her door. The hour was late. What explanation could he give Mrs. Tree at the theatre ? She would accept the excuse of any diversion shared with me, for we were good friends. Thus there seemed no alternative. I must be the scapegoat and drive to the stage door with him. No other explanation of his tardiness would be necessary.

When he had finished his brazen explanation I waxed indignant. I stopped the cab, threatened to get out ; but Tree was matchless in his own inimitable method of cajolery. His very effrontery was disarming. I yielded and played the rôle assigned to me in this domestic comedy of innocuous trifling.

Another incident connected with Tree concerns an engagement in repertoire at the Knickerbocker Theatre in this city.

Business was not very good. "Hamlet" had been announced for the Thanksgiving Day *matinée*, much against my advice and the advice of others who were financially interested in the tour.

Tree and I were standing at the back of the box-office when a lady appeared at the window and purchased ten seats for this *matinée*. After paying for them, as she turned away, she said :

" 'Trilby's' the play, is it not ? "

" No," said the treasurer, " Mr. Tree will play 'Hamlet.' "

" Oh, my," exclaimed the lady, " please return my money. Nothing would induce me to take my party to see 'Hamlet.' "

Realising the situation and that "good money" was stalking out of the theatre, Tree, from behind the door, whispered to the young man in the box-office :

"Call her back! Do not let her get away. Tell her I will change the bill to 'Trilby,' or to anything she likes!"

It was "Trilby" and not "Hamlet" which was presented at that memorable *matinée*.

He was proverbially late at rehearsals, and the fact that stage hands and mechanics who were paid by the hour were kept sitting about in idleness meant nothing to him. Such sordid details never entered his mind. He rose above them and cheerfully faced deficits which could in many instances have been avoided.

He persuaded his brilliant young brother, Max Beerbohm, to travel with him as his secretary, but the latter's understanding of his employment never suggested that he need report officially until well on in the afternoon.

The actual working staff regarded Max Beerbohm as a luxury, until I insisted that he was doubtless Tree's confidential secretary, and that his duties were so very private that none of us were ever made aware of them.

After his production of "The Seats of the Mighty," by Sir Gilbert Parker, which Tree facetiously referred to as the "Seats of the Mighty Few," the Press criticisms were very adverse, especially from the pen of Alan Dale, who wrote a slashing review to which Tree took great exception. He insisted that Dale should be excluded from the theatre thereafter as he, Tree, would not risk another such personal attack.

Ignoring these instructions, no order was given by me which would debar this able writer from the use of his regular Press seats.

"Trilby" followed the Parker play. Its success was overwhelming.

On the second night, when I went to Tree's dressing-room, I found him in a state of natural elation.

Pinned over his mirror was a newspaper clipping. It

expressed unstinted praise of Tree's Svengali. Upon examining it I discovered that the author was Alan Dale, and pointed out the fact to Tree, who laughingly said: "He must be a remarkable man, and a most astute critic. Please arrange so that I may meet him."

I cannot mention that delightful play of "Trilby," so skillfully dramatised from du Maurier's novel by Paul Potter, without telling a little story which proclaims the author's very sincere admiration of the talent of Charles Dana Gibson. It seems that when the latter was beginning his career that he wished above everything to meet George du Maurier, who was then a master in that form of art which Gibson most desired to emulate.

While in London, unheralded and unknown, he called upon du Maurier, and timidly showed him some of his drawings while seeking his advice.

No one could have been kinder or more encouraging to this young artist than du Maurier. When they parted he told Gibson how proud he would be to have him as a pupil.

Years passed before they ever met again. Gibson in the meanwhile had risen rapidly to eminence. His name was known in every American household, and his fame had become international.

Remembering his first visit, I thought a portfolio of his drawings in reproduction would interest du Maurier, so in reaching London I called upon him, taking the sketches with me.

As du Maurier turned them over he said, "When you see Gibson tell him that our rôles have changed, because he has now become the master, while I shall be proud to be his pupil."

CHAPTER XXV

WHEN Mounet Sully came to this country to play in "Oedipus," "Hamlet," and other dramas in the repertoire of the Théâtre Français, he was so upset by the noise and ugliness of New York that he refused even to go out during the day. He used to remain in his hotel bedroom with the shades drawn down and the artificial light turned on. He insisted that otherwise he suffered too much. Nevertheless, he gave some splendid performances, which were inspiring and educational.

Réjane was another French artist who visited us. A fact worthy of comment is that "Madame Sans Gêne" was played in French by Réjane, and at the same time in English by Kathryn Kidder.

The receipts were twice as large from the latter's performances, so that Réjane had to revert to those modern comedies which were unknown to our audiences, and which were purely Gallic in their conception. She was a great comedian and unequalled in our day.

Jane Hading and Coquelin were here together one season, but the tour was not financially successful despite the fact that Hading was a rarely beautiful woman. She enjoyed the advantage of having a provident mother, and in addition, her friends were wisely chosen, so that in her maturity she enjoys a large fortune, and can look with satisfaction upon her intelligently selected investments.

Charles Wyndham, Mary Moore, Marie Tempest and Cyril Maude soon became favourites with the American public. They brought their charming English productions which always received patronage and commendation. They gave infinite

attention to detail. Their stage interiors were attractive and like human homes. Their diction was better ; their distinction more assured. But a great deal of water has flowed under the American theatrical bridge since those days. We no longer need musical comedies from Daly's or the Gaiety. We have the Ziegfeld Follies, the Harris-Berlin Music Box, the Winter Garden, and the Greenwich Village Reviews under skilled manipulation. Our actors and actresses have learned the value of proper elocution, they having passed the Rubicon, both in their art and in their bearing. Nowhere in the world to-day are plays produced better than here. We have dozens of young and talented men and women who can be safely cast in the most difficult rôles. Our stage is as rich in talent as it is in beauty.

The same progress can be found in the playwrights. The majority of our great dramatic successes are home brewed. We no longer depend upon material from abroad. We have graduated in the school of play-making. Instead of buying, we are selling. To-day nearly every successful American play is eagerly sought for by the English producers. This is a very healthy sign and clearly indicates that we have developed a theatre of our own. We are no longer anæmic imitators. We are giving the world what we best understand. We are promulgating material which is indigenous to our soil.

CHAPTER XXVI

ONCE more I turn my crystal ball to see reflected therein a French villa set in the midst of green, shaded by venerable trees, dropped between park and plain, silent and enclosed. It is the Villa Trianon in Versailles as Elsie de Wolfe and I first peered at it between iron grilles. This place has a history. The land was given originally to the daughters of Louis XV, known in their day as Mesdames de France. There they rested, descending from their heavy carriages as they covered the rough road between Versailles and Marly.

There they built a little pavilion in the corner after the style of a *rendezvous de chasse*, where they partook of such refreshments as were at that time considered palatable. They called it *gôûter*. It was equivalent to our five-o'clock tea.

Later, when the next sovereign mounted the Throne, the present house was built for the surgeon of Marie Antoinette, and still another pavilion added, which was modelled in every detail after the farm buildings in the park of the Trianon, composing the *hameau* of Marie Antoinette when she played at rusticity, and milked her cows with gilded horns into pails designed and made at the Royal factory at Sèvres. One can find all these landmarks clearly indicated on the old maps of the period.

At the time when Miss de Wolfe and I lived in the English cottage previously described, we were practically next door to this property. We looked at it admiringly and wondered why it remained neglected and deserted.

Suddenly one day we noticed great yellow placards announcing its forthcoming sale at public auction.

It had been the home for years of the Duc de Nemours and his children. There were twenty-five people all told forming his household, and who were lodged, Heaven knows how, in the limited space of the Villa Trianon, for it was never a very commodious dwelling.

There was then only one bathroom and toilet combined, which served generally, but which at the time was doubtless regarded as the last note of modern luxury.

After the disintegration of this royal family the property passed through several hands until it was thrown into the market by one of the victims of the famous Madame Humbert. He was a jeweller who had speculated heavily under her guidance until he was ruined.

As we gazed at this beautiful place we began to crave its possession. We had decided that Versailles was the one spot on earth where we desired to locate. We had lived there so long in rented houses, that if we bought anywhere, it would naturally be in this paradise of our choosing. Our fortunes, however, were only mounting slowly. We were far from being in affluent circumstances. I was doing fairly well in my business, and Miss de Wolfe was earning a good salary in the theatre, yet to have a sufficient total enabling us to purchase a house and land was a serious matter.

Sardou, our friend and neighbour (this corner of Versailles was only four miles from his estate at Marly), came over at our request to inspect the place. He studied it carefully, then, thumping his heavy walking-stick upon the stone terrace, said: "My children, I advise you to buy this property if you can get it for a reasonable sum. It will prove a good investment."

How little our old friend realised that in the years ahead it was to bring us a happiness which no investment could equal.

At last came the auction, when the place was bought in for eighty-three thousand francs. Several months passed, and we learned that the owner, who lived in Troyes, and who had accepted this property in part payment of the jeweller's bad

debts, was thoroughly disgusted and determined to resell at almost any price.

We discussed this opportunity from every angle until we mustered enough courage to make an offer of sixty thousand francs. Our proposition was spurned as ridiculous. We could do nothing more. We thought of our loss, and bemoaned our fate until one day a letter reached us of an encouraging nature. We were told by the real estate agent that if we would add five thousand francs to our first offer he thought the sale might go through. We acted upon his advice, and became the proud purchasers of the Villa Trianon, of its two pavilions, the out-buildings and the ten thousand square yards of land, all this for less than twelve thousand American dollars.

The whole of the repairing and reconstruction were left in Miss de Wolfe's hands. This was in the year 1903. From the hour of the original purchase until the present time, this place, which has become famous for its beauty and for its wealth of luxury, is due entirely to the taste and knowledge of Elsie de Wolfe. It is she who created this home of loveliness, it is she who inspired and executed its every addition, it is she who planned and planted the wonderful garden, and who built the pavilion of music, surrounded by its avenues of roses. It is she who furnished every room, and who breathed her soul and taste into every corner of the house. The Villa Trianon, probably the most perfect small country place in the world, will always remain as a monument to the artistic gifts with which Miss de Wolfe is so richly endowed.

It stands upon a fairy carpet midway between park and plain. The tree-tops as they sway murmur a message of peace, and as one senses this beauty God's eternal green touches and heals one's inmost soul.

Our French neighbours, especially the Curator of the Musée de Versailles, Pierre de Nolhac, were fearful of the changes we proposed. They connected the trend of modernism with American enterprise, and could not imagine us capable of reverence and of reserve. Their surprise was very great,

therefore, when they found us restoring the past while recognising the important of hygiene and the necessity of present day convenience. The work moved slowly, and we counted the months until at last the place was turned over to us as our future habitation.

CHAPTER XXVII

ONE of our first visitors was Anne Morgan, the daughter of the late J Pierpont Morgan. I had grown to know her fairly well. She was many years my junior, and young for her age. She had often come to our little house in New York. There was something pathetic about this splendid girl, full of vitality and eagerness, yet who, as the youngest of a large family, had never been allowed to grow up. Her environment had always been conservative. Those with whom she had been thrown were respected members of that society in which they moved, but the great army of individualists was practically unknown to Anne Morgan when first I met her. The people about whom she had read and also wanted to meet were wholly off her line of march.

Her mind was ready for the spark plugs to be adjusted. Her moment of mental expansion had dawned. The power of her personality was to be set in motion. In other words, she was about to discover herself, to earn through successive experiences her own potentialities.

Probably no two people were ever more alike in fundamentals of character than were Anne Morgan and her father, as described by those who knew him best. He was a man of marvellous energy, of infinite courage, and of concentrated opinions. Once he believed in anyone or in any cause, no outside influence would have the slightest effect upon him. He could not be side-tracked. While these qualities drove him into leadership, as he grew older it was evident that he suffered from their very defects.

To acknowledge defeat was foreign to his temperament. He was always loyal to his mistakes.

Brilliant in vision, dauntless in self-confidence, there was probably no figure of his century who was more meteoric than J. Pierpont Morgan in his journey across the world of finance in which for years his ability to reign was uncontested. It was not until the men whom he despised had gotten together, determined upon the undoing of his prestige, not until the old order of property rights had been challenged by the new order of human rights, not until the question of how a man had accomplished took precedence over what he had accomplished, that Mr. Morgan and the associates who were affiliated with him were forced to answer for their stewardship to those who, until then, had seemed mere soldiers in the ranks. President Theodore Roosevelt was threatened with impeachment by the capitalists of Wall Street because he would neither bend his knee nor choke the truths which he felt and uttered. It was Roosevelt who dared to come out in the open and call "halt." It was Roosevelt who in the days of his forcefulness took the helm, and directed the fate of our country upon the high seas where, until then, the power of privilege had dominated the power of labour.

I doubt whether the significance of this conflict has ever been fully realised. Roosevelt won the victory, but later, through political defeat, paid the price of his triumph.

Mr. Morgan was patriarchal in his views. The emancipated woman enjoyed no favour in his eyes, therefore as his daughter grew up she determined that she must think for herself.

She has in later years amply justified her early independence of spirit, for there is no woman in our country of finer fibre, of higher vision, of more disinterested conduct or of more persistent achievement than herself. She has an unusually accurate as well as an executive mind. And yet despite her forceful quality of brain her heart has retained the simplicity and the sincerity of a child.

After that first visit to Versailles she began to draw her

own conclusions, to develop her own opinions, to select her own interests, in other words, to stand on her own feet.

To watch this expanding of her mentality was a privilege. A friendship was thus established as her visits each summer grew in length. The Villa Trianon became her playground and her pastime. Miss de Wolfe and I were obliged to combine our respective businesses with our pleasures, but it all seemed to dovetail.

Miss Morgan and I were fond of purposeless motoring, so we gadded about sightseeing over a very large area and under conditions of self-indulgent comfort. Our last motor trip together of any consequence was in 1914, at the breaking out of the war, when we drove from Savoie to Biarritz, where we joined Miss de Wolfe, who had been in Spain. We travelled through a line of barrier bayonets and past hundreds of buoyant poilus preparing for the unknown conflict.

Between Chambéry and Bayonne we were forced to show our papers of identity and our passports some seventy times. It was the beginning of the reign of terror which made everyone a suspect, but which in its confusion frequently harboured an enemy as a cherished friend.

Miss de Wolfe only cares for motoring when there is something objective at the other end. She never shared my sheer joy of settling myself in a car, of riding along aimlessly feeling a symphony in its whirr, of looking through green branches at a background of blue sky, of watching valley and mountain with the indolence of a vagrant mind, of taking a vast senuous pleasure out of the vibrations of the engine, and of experiencing a sense of relaxation such as nothing else in the world can give. It is this and more which a motor-car has always meant to me.

In 1912 it was decided that a new addition to the Villa should be made so that we could have further guest rooms. We laughingly called this "the Morgan Wing," for its construction was her contribution to the general investment. Architecturally it stands against the original house frankly inspired

by utility and *not* as a pretentious effort to any furtherance of beauty.

Toward the close of the war I realised that my time must be more and more devoted to interests in my own country, that my work here must be made paramount, and that I could no longer be free to absent myself for so many months in every year. My legitimate business had been ruthlessly disrupted as was the case with so many. Therefore, due to the aftermath, I gradually drifted away from my trans-Atlantic moorings. Miss de Wolfe and Miss Morgan generously relieved me of my share of the Villa Trianon, and assumed it between themselves so that my financial responsibilities in France were lifted from my shoulders. From time to time I have returned to this land of enchantment, for I shall never cease to regard it as my first love.

I gave up France as a residence, but never as the most alluring playground of the whole world. During the years following 1914, there were, however, many causes productive of internal friction, for nothing is a more unlovely spectacle than to find one's compatriots in a foreign land so disloyal to their own country as to throw the balance of their influence against it. The traitors to the United States were not only to be found in the enemy's camps, but in the most luxurious drawing-rooms of the American colony in Paris.

At the moment when our soldiers were shedding their blood upon the battlefields, sent over by the Administration then in control, when our Chief Executive was struggling with problems even greater than those of military strategy, when, whether right or wrong, we should have stood for solidarity in the eyes of the world, our home Government was too often made the target of American criticism, and its short-comings were noisily described and derided by our compatriots who were the loudest in proclaiming their allegiance to the Allies.

It was a sorry spectacle to say the least, and one which forced upon one's mind the tragedy of that man or of that woman who stands literally without a country.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WHILE selling objects of art had become such a prevalent industry in Europe, our country had been busy producing the men who could buy them. Great fortunes had been accumulated, but wealth was still undigested. The process of assimilation had just begun.

In those days each new and pretentious household selected some indigent youth whose business capacity had never been demonstrated, but who possessed a large social acquaintance, whose personality was pleasing, and who knew how to direct with success the kitchen and the wine cellar. The ranks of the little brothers of the rich thrived and increased. Newport, R.I., became their happy hunting-ground.

Possibly things were better done and society was more agreeable under these conditions than at present. The all-sufficient and aggressive type of millionaire now so familiar was not then so conspicuous. The fortunes were more modestly disbursed. The mere building of palatial residences, the acquiring of museum pieces, the employment of many servants elaborately liveried, the highly-paid services of an able Press agent, the Lorenzo di Medici rôle of patron of art, and the drama, does not seem after all to have produced a very finished article. Blunder after blunder is made, and the sublime part of it is that the sinners remain ignorant of their sins.

I remember a luncheon given to the wife of one of these newcomers by an amiable young man who had made considerable money through the wise advice of the lady's husband. On this occasion, in order to show a proper appreciation

of the latter's kind interest, he had invited some very well-bred and socially prominent women to meet her.

This was to be her *début* in the world of fashion. She evidently thought that if she came on time her eagerness would seem too apparent, hence she was so late that the luncheon began without her. Arriving finally, the host, after making the proper introductions, upbraided her jocosely for her tardiness, to which she replied :

“ Well, there is certainly no excuse for my being so late because I have seven motor-cars in the garage.”

This same woman, when her daughter was married, was most successful in eliminating every blood relation she had in issuing the wedding invitations, yet she had thus despised the best reason for her own existence as she had really sprung from a stock of good citizens.

There is probably no desolation in the world to be compared to that of an enormous house of architectural beauty, decorated and furnished with exquisite taste, filled with priceless objects of art, and yet occupied by two people who socially are thoroughly inadequate, or if they have children, are bringing them up as little vulgar, purse-proud prigs.

To see them living in spacious splendour is certainly an unedifying sight. It has always seemed a marvel to me why decent and intelligent folk should be bored with them. Often the excuse is made that one meets such interesting personalities at their table, yet the pall which usually hangs over such establishments casts its shadow upon the brilliant guests, and it would be infinitely more sympathetic as a rule to run across the latter amid less pretentious surroundings, in simple homes, for instance, where the owners themselves contribute to the pleasurable sense of well being as well as do the furniture, the pictures and the food.

One thing I observed in my vast passing acquaintance with millionaires was that they inevitably played *solitaire* as a pastime. It seemed a hall-mark, and in travelling, the moment I found some fellow-passenger absorbed day after day with this

very unsociable game, I knew to a certainty that his fortune ran high in the millions, but whether he played solitaire because of his fortune or whether he had acquired his fortune through playing solitaire, I was never able to determine. As the game is one of contemplation, concentration and combination, who knows but that many a big deal in Wall Street has been projected while indulging in this apparently innocuous form of enjoyment.

Another striking feature so far as millionaires are concerned is their inborn suspicion of the motives of all who approach them. The magnitude of their wealth has assumed such preposterous proportions in their eyes that life is out of focus.

They are always looking for trouble. They are in a vicious circle, for the men and women who surround them are as a rule polite grafters, hence their suspicions are justified. On the other hand, this vulgar attitude of mistrust keeps away all really worth-while people. The millionaire becomes literally hoisted by his own petard. Furthermore, he rarely hears the truth, and so his self-inflation proceeds without check. His trained secretary sorts out the Press clippings before he sees them. Only those of a flattering nature come under his eye. His underlings keep their jobs by removing all thorns from his path.

He is fed upon adulation. He hears nothing but praise. The power of wealth is preached to him by the sycophants who travel with him to Palm Beach or to Cannes. In his own line of business they are his inferiors, but he is physically incapable of forming an estimate of people as wholly apart from their material surroundings, of realising that the doors which are closed to him and to his family are swung on hinges of intellectual value of high purpose and of self-respect; that there are still thousands of men and women who are supreme masters of their minds and of their souls, who refuse to bow to a calf of gold, and whose hands, upstretched to heaven, pluck from it stars which, unsurpassed in beauty, shine on and on refulgent and immortal.

Fortunately, however, for the world, there are hundreds of men of large fortunes whose intelligent generosity has proved of inestimable benefit to mankind. The unostentation of their mode of life, their constant effort to alleviate the conditions of others who are less fortunate, the support of our hospitals, the gifts to our public museums, the eternal response to the eternal appeal merely emphasises that there are two kinds of millionaires as opposed to each other in precept, and in principle, as are the antipodes. In every town in every state, men like the above can be found, faithful and just stewards of that wealth which has either been inherited or acquired.

The day when millions can be accumulated through privilege is over. The public is alert. Franchises are no longer granted behind closed doors. The tax-payers become volunteer investigators.

From the hour when human needs took precedence in questions of legislation, the death knell of the old methods was struck. A man can earn the limit of his energy and of his brain, but he can no longer ignore the righteous claims of those less richly endowed.

What was once the dawn of the to-morrow is now the noon-day sun of the day in which we live.

CHAPTER XXIX

DURING the winter for many years Elsie de Wolfe and I were both working so hard that nearly all of our social pleasures had to be confined to the summer months. It was then that we were in the midst of a whirl of gaiety, keeping up our old friendships and cementing new ones.

One principle in life to which I have been fairly faithful is to always cultivate people who are better and finer and cleverer than myself. It is more morally wholesome to bend one's knees back and look up, than to drop one's head forward and look down.

Nothing is so demoralising as to spend precious hours in the society of mental inferiors whose admiration is valueless and whose adulation is dangerous. To be satisfied with such companionship is either the indication of an inferior mentality or of an egregious vanity. On the other hand, to be able to submerge one's own accomplishments in the greater performances of others is of inestimable benefit to the growth of character and to the development of mind.

There is a strange twist in people, however, which I have often remarked. Some of those who are most fastidious in taste in material things will fill their rooms with a collection of human inadequates who beggar description. I sometimes think that the prevalent use of external cosmetics eats out the internal brain if persisted in long enough.

Maz Beerbohm wrote an essay on "The Defence of Cosmetics," which was never intended to convince ; its purpose being merely one of gracious encouragement.

Were my crystal ball smeared with rouge and smirched



Photograph by M. E. Hewitt

ELISABETH MARBURY AND ELSIE DE WOLFE

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with lip-stick it would be of little value to me. Happily, it is clear and clean, so that its reflections are reliable.

The sale of rejuvenating creams or of restorative powders is always profitable. There is no town so small but that it can boast of its beauty parlour. There is no woman so poor who will not become its patron. The search of the Holy Grail or the voyage toward a new continent never enlisted so much energy and so much faith as does this pursuit of youth by old age. It is a race not of the fleet but of the most credulous.

There are no longer any grandmothers to be found, and even mothers are becoming rare. The struggle is unequal because Father Time has the contestants beaten at the start.

If only women would learn that the real elixir of life can be found within, that if peace and content and kindness dwell in their souls, then there is no surer protection against the ravages of time; if only they will study the art of growing old gracefully accumulating such intrinsic resources of happiness that when the years are checked off they will only mean greater and deeper interests and a more intense rejoicing in God's gift of life. Thus they can look toward the sinking sun, not as an ending, but as a beginning of something more beautiful than anything they have yet known.

The silver sheen of peaceful old age will illuminate their faces, and death when it comes will be robbed of all sting.

CHAPTER XXX

I HAVE frequently visited the French city of Le Mans, but always under widely different circumstances.

With the exception of a tourist's impression of a dull place and of a very inferior hotel, it had assumed no interest in my eyes until 1907, when Anne Morgan and I journeyed there in order to witness the initial flight of Wilbur Wright, the bird-man from Dayton, Ohio.

We were fortunate in making the acquaintance of Hart O. Berg, a successful promoter, and of his charming wife who was an Englishwoman. It was through the former's enterprising spirit that the arrangements were made which resulted in this important test of Wright's invention. Santos Dumont, Maxim, and Blériot were already experimenting in the science of modern aviation. The world was awake to the importance of this new force, and while the science was still in its infancy, the moment had come to show the practical side of it.

To the honour and glory of America, it was Wilbur Wright who demonstrated the feasibility of flying. It was he who proved to a doubting public that the chief obstacle had been overcome and that the perfecting of details was then merely a matter of time.

The aerodrome was several kilometres out of Le Mans, and only French officials, capitalists, and a few personal intruders like ourselves were invited to witness these preliminary trials.

Mr. Wright's confidence was convincing to those of us who met him. He was not in France as an experimentalist. He had solved his problems in Dayton. Reason and not chance was his guide. But at this time wind and weather played no

small part in aviation. Both had to be reckoned with. Therefore we had to wait patiently several days before he decided to fly. These delays aroused scepticism of course. The atmosphere of doubt was everywhere, whispering groups gathered in the lobby of the hotel. Bits of unfavourable criticism were gleaned upon the street corner.

However, nothing had any effect upon the inventor. He went stolidly about his business until the auspicious moment arrived. There was a light wind blowing on the afternoon of this historical day. It was slowly dying down toward six o'clock. We who sat on the grandstand were quivering with excitement, still uncertain as to Wright's action. Suddenly we saw his tall gaunt figure saunter across the field where the machine had been hauled. In those days aeroplanes upon a given signal were shot from a form of catapult.

Wright climbed into his seat. The assistants started the propellers. The machine was set in motion. Never have I experienced a greater thrill than when I saw those broad white wings spread in their upward flight. They mounted steadily and with a surprising speed, while the height obtained was low, only a few hundred feet, yet this fact made no difference. The air had been conquered. The supreme invention had passed beyond the realm of experiment, and it was the genius of the Wright brothers from Dayton, Ohio, which was stamped upon the face of Europe.

How often in after years, when during the war perhaps as many as thirty planes would fly of an afternoon over our lawn at Versailles, rushing from Buc and Villecoublay to reach the fighting front, I would recall those summer days in Le Mans, when we sat contemplating Wilbur Wright's initial efforts with pleasure and pride, but without the slightest realisation that this small and imperfect aeroplane was but the forerunner of the army force to become such a vital factor in a war, which, at that time, had not even cast its shadow over the world.

One of Wilbur Wright's peculiarities, if so it can be called,

was that he refused absolutely to use foreign material in the making or repairing of his machines. He had taken over with him American machinists and American supplies. He depended literally upon his home market. The reason of this was simple. He had tested out American merchandise. He knew he could rely upon it, whereas whatever was bought of foreign manufacture must perforce be an unknown equation. His was the life at stake and he did not mean to take any unnecessary chances. I remember how completely his morale broke down when the news of Orville Wright's accident in Washington was flashed across the ocean. While his brother escaped, his fellow passenger had paid the price of this adventure, through no fault of the careful pilot, but through circumstances which could not have been avoided.

The development of the new industry was rapid. Factory after factory was established. Invention after invention was tried out. Only a little while, and we were at the aerodrome in Rheims watching Latham, one of the most brilliant of all the aviators, circle over the grandstand and literally over the head of the President of the French Republic. Then Pegoud, the trick flyer, who first looped the loop. It was all very exhilarating to note as an exciting incident that which later was taken as a matter of course.

The only astronomer I ever met is Camille Flammarion, and I shall always remember the day Miss de Wolfe and I spent with him in his home at Juvisy. Miss Loie Fuller was also one of his guests on that occasion—and as she floated around and across his lawn after luncheon in more or less gossamer garments, introducing her willowy, billowy movements, the searcher of stars seemed to relax with every evidence of keen enjoyment. Possibly this sprang from his predilection for stellar discoveries.

When we were personally conducted to view the wonders of the firmament through his mammoth telescope I politely waxed eloquent from wonder ; but after all these years frankly confess that not only could I see nothing at that moment, but

that at *no* moment in my life have I ever been able to see anything through a telescope.

This fact reminds me, however, of an incident which is worth the telling. I wanted to experiment privately with this telescope proposition to learn what was wrong with my eyes, so having seen a perfect instrument advertised at the cost of one dollar, I with a sublime credulity enclosed the amount. In due time the package arrived. I opened it eagerly and found therein the coveted telescope. I adjusted it to the best of my ability, but saw nothing. I then casually suggested to my secretary that she should profit by my purchase. She raised it to the light, but confessed that she was afraid she didn't understand it. Then, determined to prove the value of my acquisition, I called in the office-boy, a very bright-eyed, and much alive proposition. I explained that I had purchased my telescope at a bargain and felt confident that once he had become familiar with its working much educational enjoyment would result. He took it from my desk, with a certain air of scepticism, and retired to the outer office. Soon he returned, walked up to me with a manner which left no room for doubt as to his opinion of my intelligence and said :

" Say, how much did you pay for this ? "

Striving to maintain my dignity, I replied, " One dollar."

" Stung all right," said my young friend as he made his exit.

CHAPTER XXXI

A MOST vivid personality is now reflected in my crystal ball ; none other than Henry Adams, that brilliant and recognised influence for so many years in Washington society.

Descended from an historical family which boasted of two presidents of the United States and of men of even greater value than those who had held office, Henry Adams was an international figure in literature, politics, and society. His acquaintance was large. He knew intimately the majority of those who were eminent in the world. His opinions were respected, his advice sought. His contributions to history were widely read. He was as familiar a figure in Boston, in London, and in Paris as he was in Washington. He received the friendship of the élite and he gave his friendship to the lowly.

It was fitting that he should write his own autobiography and that he should finally release that admirable book, which was first circulated privately, dealing with Chartres and St. Michel.

I owe much to my association with him, which was recurrent for more than a decade. It was he who first revealed to me the beauty and the meaning of stained glass. Hundreds of times I had stood before windows of such intrinsic loveliness as those in the Sainte Chapelle, Paris, in Beauvais, in Chartres, and elsewhere, without either understanding or appreciating them ; and it was not until Mr. Adams became my guide and teacher that I was able to realise the marvels of this expression in art or to differentiate between the creations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the modern imitations from Munich or the modern substitutes from Nancy.

No man was a more delightful companion. His library was his kingdom, and while he exhibited a rare tolerance when confronted with such ignorance as mine, one felt that it was he who was the master of his books. They had become a part of him. It was his rich intellect which supplemented their usefulness and which suggested what to take from them of value and what to leave as of slight importance.

He had many "nieces" either through relation or from adoption, but while I was years his junior he always insisted that I was his only "aunt."

I doubt whether any visitor or student in the Cathedral of Chartres ever gleaned as much of its spirit as did Henry Adams. Its very soul seemed to have penetrated his being. He loved it as a lover. He wrote of it as a historian, and I shall never stand beneath its lancet windows, which he described as "jewelled," without feeling the presence of this courtly and lovable old friend who had been to me the interpreter of their beauty.

In the Rock Creek Cemetery near Washington, hidden in the massive foliage, is a monument by Augustus St. Gaudens, erected by Henry Adams in memory of his wife.

It stands without either tablet or description. As an expression of silent grief it is so intensive in its art and in its appeal that as one gazes at its compelling majesty the man who, in the sublimity of his vision, was inspired to command it shares now in everlasting honour with the genius who created it.

Though in my early days politicians interested me but little, yet to listen to their addresses was often a pleasure, not because of the sentiments they voiced but because the fall of phrases has always proved a singular attraction to me.

I used to sit in the galleries to hear the noted speakers wherever I happened to be, but nowhere in the world did I find anyone possessing a greater gift of oratory than the late W. Bourke Cockran. He was my friend for thirty years, and I can recall many different occasions when I had the privilege of listening to him. He was the last of the old school and a fitting

successor to Daniel Webster, whose speeches are still studied as forensic models.

Bourke Cockran could talk eloquently upon any subject with which he was in sympathy, after merely a cursory study of its facts. He could carry a message to the multitude so that they were moved and convinced. He could sway a crowd and impress an audience. His vitality was only second to his enthusiasm.

As a man he was richly endowed with personal gifts and acquirements. In friendship he was proverbially generous and faithful. It was impossible for him to be anything but loyal in his affections. Despite his social popularity he remained simple and apparently unaffected by the praise and flattery with which he was surrounded. His hospitality was endless, his helpfulness universal. Notwithstanding that he came to our country from Sligo when only a lad of seventeen, during the fifty-two years of his residence in America he never lost his hibernian accent which was as percolating and mellow as ripe fruit. His wit was inexhaustible, and on the public platform he could answer any heckler and reply to any opponent.

I remember once when he was speaking before a motley audience of two thousand in Tammany Hall that a semitic agitator, aware of his sympathy with the Sinn Feins in Ireland, thought to embarrass him by shouting :

"Vat about de Irish question? Vat haf you to say about dat, Mister Cockran?"

Whereupon, with the greatest good humour, Cockran turned in the direction of the disturber and said :

"After the meeting I shall be very glad to discuss this with the gentleman having the Connemara accent," which of course brought down the house.

His anecdotes of his boyhood in the old country were many, but especially do I remember his description of the farmhouse over which his wonderful mother presided. There was a large family of children of which Bourke was the eldest. Devout and pious Catholics, it was the custom of bringing each day to a close by reading aloud from the Lives of the Saints.

The mother would gather the little brood about her, the peat fire would be slowly burning out, on the table a tallow dip would be sputtering, and in a crooning monotonous voice she would reveal the legend of St. Lawrence on the gridiron ; of St. Simon on the pillar ; or of the Nun who for some unconfessed sin was forced to stand while the red and yellow flames of hell illuminated her pallid face.

The little children listened, deeply moved by these horrors, their knees knocking with fright and their dread of what was before them increasing second by second, for they were all awaiting the moment when once the reading was ended and, the candle extinguished, they were to mount the steps which led from the living-room to the upper story, where the thin straw mattresses lay all in a row. Bourke, as the eldest, headed his procession. No one's imagination had been more kindled by these legends than his own. He was in terror of what personal tragedy might fall upon him on account of the evil deeds of which he knew in his soul he had been guilty. When would the wrath of God strike him ? When could he be sure of escape from penalties such as even the saints could not avoid ? Nevertheless, clammy with perspiration engendered by fear, his tiny heart beating so that he could hear its thumps, he would firmly grasp the child next him by the hand, and as they rolled into their beds would not only urge them to fortitude but would lead them in their prayer of " Hail Mary," and would make the final appeal to God to preserve them that night from all danger.

From no one else in the world did I ever receive such illuminating pictures of this early farm life in Ireland. They were Bourke's own vivid memories up to the hour of his death.

No man I have ever known lived his faith as did Cockran. It was neither an attitude of mind nor a habit assumed on Sunday. The principles of the Catholic Church in which he believed were such a part and parcel of his composition that his religion was with him always, the moral propeller of his entire existence. To have known Bourke Cockran and to think of

him as other than a Catholic would be an impossibility. His belief was the mainspring of his life. Unconsciously every action, every thought sprang from it. There was never an hour of the day when his soul was empty of worship.

On the night of his death in Washington, a friend who had been with him after dinner celebrating his sixty-ninth birthday related that when she was leaving, at midnight, he insisted upon escorting her to her automobile. The stars were shining brightly. Moonlight was over all. After saying good-night, he paused for a moment on the steps of his house, and the last glimpse my friend had of him was standing silently, his hands clasped and his face upturned. Doubtless he was uttering a silent prayer, the substance of all he hoped for, the confirmation of all he believed.

Jaurès, who was shot in 1914, was as great an orator in the French Chamber as is Viviani, who has frequently been heard in our country.

My first recollection of the latter was in the early nineties, when he was brought to us at Versailles by that classical sou-brette of the Théâtre Français, Mlle. Rachel Boyer. We were sitting on the terrace after luncheon when Mr. Viviani drew from his pocket a cigar, which he asked our permission to smoke.

At this time he was a violent radical, upholding every socialistic doctrine, bitterly antagonistic to the clerical and military parties, advocating the rights of labour and even going so far as to approve of the Deputies in the Chamber appearing there in overalls and blue jeans. He posed as the man of the masses. I asked him with apparent innocence what brand of cigar he preferred. He showed me the paper band and said that this was the only kind he ever smoked.

I happened to know that they cost five francs each. I begged to take a snapshot of him. He said, "With pleasure, but allow me to put down my cigar."

"No, kindly hold it. It will make the picture more natural."

After I had clicked the bulb and closed up my camera I said, "Now, Mr. Viviani, I have something which will vastly

interest your constituents : a portrait showing you in the act of smoking a five-franc cigar." He tried to smile, but it was a very perfunctory response to my joke. He was never at ease with me after that, in fact in very recent years he referred to the incident, evidently afraid of polite blackmailing. The difference between an American and a French politician under similar circumstances is that the former would distribute the high-priced tobacco he smoked among his supporters regardless of the cost, thus proving himself to be a good mixer and entitled to their votes, but the deviousness of the Latin mind and the parsimony of the Latin character could never handle such a situation in this liberal fashion.

Possibly we are all more or less savage by nature, for unless we are as phlegmatic as bivalves we thrill at the mere thought of adventure and tremble at the sheer expectancy of risk, thus the feverish excitement of watching trainers enter a lion's cage may be attributed to this undercurrent of masked emotion and account for the hope which is always dormant, that, if any catastrophe is really going to happen, we would like to be on hand at the happening.

The Place d'Armes at Versailles was an admirable locality for the itinerant circus. Each year the great Hagenbeck, with his magnificent menagerie of wild beasts, made it his headquarters for a fortnight.

We, together with some American neighbours, had reserved for the opening three centre boxes which commanded not only the ring but the runway.

The place was crowded. One act after another was performed, to the delight of this suburban audience. The salient feature of seeing the world-renowned trainer actually enter with his lions, tigers, and leopards was to be the climax of the evening's enjoyment. Suddenly a blast of trumpets and there they came, slinking, crawling, recalcitrant, and snarling, with Hagenbeck himself, long and lithe of limb, agile as a deer, and dominant as a ruler.

There had been a severe thunderstorm earlier in the evening,

which accounted, as was explained, for the unusual restlessness of the animals. They were refractory and rebellious, although we assumed that the constant cracking of the whip and the recurrent explosion of the pistol was only part of the exhibition, intended to emphasise the danger in the elementary mind of the public.

Two leopards were unduly ugly, however. Their disobedience to the drastic authority of their trainer was evident. They simply refused to obey. Thus there was a sense of relief when the act was brought to a close and when the animals slunk off one by one. The last to leave the ring were the two leopards in question. Not for a second had their master, with his lynx-like eyes, relaxed his attention. He had never ceased to concentrate his will power upon them until they had actually crossed the sill of the cage and had started down the runway. The tension had been extreme. The man relaxed, but it was the infinitesimal part of a second too soon. The leopards turned. They fell upon him. They dragged him to the ground while uttering guttural sounds of savage triumph.

To those of us who were present the scene was one never to be forgotten. Dozens of assistants rushed in with hot irons, clubs, and revolvers. The animals were finally pulled off from the bleeding body of their victim. They were hurled into confinement behind the iron bars.

Hagenbeck himself, with a pallor that was deathly, stumbled to the exit, striving to raise his arm with a gesture of reassurance.

But the poor fellow was not superhuman despite his splendid courage. We saw him totter, then fall.

He was lifted out by the attendants while his manager insisted that he had not been seriously injured.

The following day we went to the local hospital, where we found that he had his arm and thigh terribly torn and mangled.

It was six weeks before he was discharged, yet in talking to him it was evident that he was counting the days until he could return to his beloved beasts and resume his life's work among them.

CHAPTER XXXII

As already stated I was born a Protestant, my father being a trustee in the Presbyterian Church which stood on the southeast corner of Twenty-fourth Street and Madison Avenue. Our pastors under whose teachings I had sat were the Rev. William Adams, Dr. Tucker, and Dr. Charles Parkhurst. After the death of my parents I gave up all church affiliations, as I discovered that my attendance had been a matter of habit rather than of belief, and an excellent habit it was. In looking back I always insist that I owe much of any stability of character which I may possess and of any self-restraint which I may exercise to this early training in the Presbyterian Church.

Let me describe the normal Sabbath which even in the exuberance of childhood was never questioned. Instead of sleeping later on the seventh day of the week, we were up betimes, were literally scrubbed and scoured, and sent off to attend a nine o'clock Sunday School. At ten-fifteen we adjourned to the church, where we remained until twelve-thirty. The sermon was as a rule an hour long. We then walked home sedately to partake of a noonday meal, which in our household represented advanced thought, for it was hot, consisting of a rib roast, several vegetables, and a rice-pudding, whereas in those days in the model Christian family the food was prepared the day before and served cold. Our bill of fare never varied.

After dinner we were allowed to read such innocuous books as we had brought from the Sunday School library. No games of any kind were ever permitted. To sew, knit, or crochet was tabooed. At three-thirty we returned to the

afternoon service, which lasted until nearly five. We had what we pleased to call "high tea" at six-thirty. My chief recollection of supper revolves around soda-biscuits, slices of cold meats, cakes, and preserves. Old friends frequently were invited to drop in to this evening meal. After it was over the gathering was broken into groups. Usually my mother sat at the piano, playing familiar hymns, surrounded by the children who knew them all by heart and who sang them lustily. At least we were thus given the opportunity of making a noise and ridding ourselves of some pent-up energy. Occasionally, instead of singing, those of us who were younger sat at the large dining-room table, which had in the meanwhile been cleared, while my father showed us illustrations in a pictorial Bible, expounding to us the scripture in his own graphic and inimitable way.

At nine we had evening prayers, which, by the way, were an incident of Sunday, for on week-days we only had morning prayers, the uncertainty of the comings and goings of the family after business hours necessitating the omission. We were thoroughly drilled in the Bible, committing to memory chapter after chapter, and learning by heart all of the popular Psalms.

If any doubts or queries entered our juvenile minds they were never very intrusive.

After the first sixteen years I automatically became a teacher in Sunday School myself, and it was then my turn to do the expounding.

About this time I first met E. H. Harriman, then a young man at the beginning of his financial career. He was very slight and never good looking, but extremely decorous in his conduct. He was deeply interested in the Wilson Mission, which stood on the corner of Avenue A, and Eighth Street. There we were co-workers. Afterwards he married Miss Mary Averill, of Ogdensburg, who had a very sweet and womanly personality. He met her when on a visit to her cousin Hattie Averill who subsequently married George Clark of the old

firm of Clark, Dodge and Company. Julia Clark, his sister, and I had been brought up together from our baby days until we left school.

E. H. Harriman's engagement came as somewhat of a surprise to us all, as he gave no outward evidence of his wooing, nor, I might add, did he ever suggest at that period the quality of leadership which became so emphasised in his later years.

As a pioneer in behalf of newsboys, as a benefactor to home missions, we had no inkling of the future of the man who later performed such a priceless service to his generation by bridging the distance between the Pacific and the Atlantic, and by replacing for all time the covered waggon with the monster machine. In my maturity I have never crossed the Continent in a comfortable Pullman without recalling those days of my early acquaintance with E. H. Harriman, who was destined to become one of our great masters of industry.

I have always strenuously objected to personal stories of conversions. They savour too much of the camp meeting and of the revival stock-taking. Suffice it, therefore, to say that when I eventually determined to become a Catholic it was the result of adult conviction uninfluenced and spontaneous. An earnest desire to honestly understand what those of an opposing creed really do believe often leads to a change of faith, and to find in a world reeking with stultifying selfishness the actual practice of sacrifice is as salutary as it is inspiring. Penance is the soul's best lubricant. I was received into the Church by a simple priest whose parish was in the East Nineties. The little wooden structure which served as the place of worship counted as its members only very poor and humble folk. The pastor and his assistants were the volunteer chaplains at North Brother Island on which were the contagious hospitals belonging to the City. These men knew no fear of disease, for they regarded their attendance in this plague centre as merely part of their day's work.

I have persistently maintained, however, that nothing in

the world demands more universal respect and tolerance than those questions affecting racial and religious differences. Woe to those so-called Christians who fail to grasp the very essence of the faith they profess, namely, love and charity for their fellow-men.

Prejudice born of intolerance will go far toward destroying a people and wrecking a nation.

It was in 1905 that the separation between Church and State occurred in France. It was Waldeck Rousseau who first started the conflagration. After analysis proved that he never intended that the political flames should spread with the intensity which subsequently developed. The upheaval was far more drastic than anything he would have sponsored had he been able to forecast its operation.

When convents were emptied at a few hours' notice, when little helpless orphans with the good Sisters who had lived their lives within the four walls were ejected ruthlessly into the streets, when nothing was sacred, when none was protected, when honest and God-fearing men and women of simple faith, whose lives had been spent in serving humanity, were suddenly bereft of shelter, then the people of France began to realise that they might have prevented these extreme measures.

That religion be kept wholly apart from politics should be the fervent desire of all right-minded people; that everyone should be allowed to worship freely according to his or her faith is the basis of liberty; that no man and no group of men who govern be allowed to differentiate in favour of one form of creed as against another should be a fundamental principle of any democracy, and it is when this spirit of intolerance and bigotry creeps into a nation that the solidarity of that nation becomes imperilled. No wars are more bitter than those undertaken in the name of religion. No revenge is more acute than that inspired through the exaltation of fanaticism.

It is little wonder that the youth of France, suddenly deprived of religious instruction, should have drifted into an

attitude of disrespect and of irreverence. Nothing was any longer sacred. They were taught to despise every symbol of their traditional faith, while nothing constructive was offered them in its stead. They had ceased to care for God, and they were not taught to care for their fellow-men. The numbers of young criminals increased in every class. The word "apache" was coined and the extravagance of debauchery became common. The prisons were inadequate to house the prisoners. The tribunals were unable to cope with the ever-increasing number of trials.

In 1914, nine years after this *débacle*, the war broke out, and many of the nursing sisters and the faithful priests were needed in the service of their country, from which they had been expelled. They were consequently sneaked back into France, chiefly because they could be made useful.

The splendid and inspiring work which they did in the hospitals and on the battlefields can never be over-estimated. They were illuminated in their efforts by a spirit which even persecution had not quenched, and many a soldier who had jeered at and derided every manifestation of a religion upon which he had been taught to trample, turned in his suffering to some kind Sister or to some good, gentle priest, who restored to him the faith of his childhood, and who ministered to him in the hour of his agony.

The reconstruction of towns and villages, the replanting of fields, the rebuilding of cities, the generous contributions to restore the waste caused by German guns will amount to less than nothing if it means that more materialism will be engendered while spiritual ideals are being submerged. It is the soul of Europe which is in danger, not her body ; and those of us who had hoped that this soul would have risen once again from the ashes of her suffering are, in the face of actualities, trembling as to what will be her ultimate fate. Read contemporaneous literature, study modern art, review present-day drama, watch society ; go into the provinces abroad and there contrast the habits of the bourgeoisie and of the peasants of

to-day, with the conditions which obtained before the war, and you will find little to inspire you with confidence.

What effect has the great catastrophe had ? What country has been morally benefited by it ? That is the question which is being flashed eternally and which no one dares to answer, for the whole world seems drifting upon a sea of forgetfulness. Neither individuals nor rulers remember what has been. A great asbestos curtain has fallen upon promises and pledges, upon hopes and ideals which have become merely properties of history, stored and neglected until such time when a new emergency may discover in them some current value.

CHAPTER XXXIII

My journeyings were not confined to France and England. Each summer an extended motor trip was in order.

Notwithstanding that the roads were less good in both Italy and Spain, we found so much compensation in the beauty and art of these countries that we accepted the less comfortable conditions without a murmur. So far as filth and fleas are concerned, tours through the South of France provide an excellent preliminary education. One can learn there how to overcome the first and how to kill the second. It is merely a question of habit after all. Taking tubs, by the way, does not necessarily insure cleanliness. I remember that one of my early suitors was an Englishman who had a lovely tenor voice. He was eternally talking about his "barth." Yet I discovered that in summer he wore his woollen coat and trousers next to his skin on account of the heat. His habit of never wearing underclothing during the hot months I later ascertained was very common in England. Therefore it is difficult for me to become impressed by the frequent ablutions of our English cousins.

F. Marion Crawford was one of my friends and clients. His home at Sorrento, Italy, was very lovely. His visits to America, however, became more and more frequent as the years went on owing to the financial exigencies caused by an ever-growing family. Crawford could never indulge in rest. He was a prolific writer. Hardly had one novel left the press than another was under way. He wrote with a persistent regularity I have rarely seen equalled. He lived always very

simply. He especially disliked show and splurge of any kind. He avoided crowds, and absolutely refused to be lionised. His friends were few, but these he saw frequently and trusted absolutely. In our business relations, which extended unbroken to the day of his death, he was invariably reasonable and considerate, always courteous and appreciative.

His early novel, "To Leeward," was called very daring at the time it was written by the then young author. Contrast it now with the literature which floods the country. It could almost be admitted into a Sunday School library.

Mrs. Cadwalader Jones, sister-in-law of Edith Wharton, lived in a charming old house in West Eleventh Street. She was in the habit of giving Sunday luncheons, which are among my most cherished reminiscences. There one was assured of meeting really good society. Men like Marion Crawford, John La Farge, John Sargent, Augustus St. Gaudens, John Cadwalader and others of equal distinction were her constant guests. Her food was delicious and I can recall her lobster mayonnaise and her rice-pudding as symphonic poems. Mrs. Jones herself was a charming hostess, a centre in New York. In recent years she has spent much of her time abroad, although her home here has never been disturbed.

Marion Crawford's love of Italy inspired many of his novels. They reflected the surroundings in this country of his adoption. He knew the children of the soil, and even here felt more at home while wandering through our Italian quarters than when he strolled up Fifth Avenue. He was very tall and handsome. When he smiled his face became illuminated with gentleness.

Another friend of ours in Italy was Bernard Berenson, the authority on fifteenth-century art. He and his capable English wife, Mary Berenson, also an excellent writer, live just outside of Florence. He is one of the few men I have ever known whose intellectual acumen is supplemented by a keen commercial sense. He not only knows how to purchase advantageously, but how to sell as well. His word is law with

dealers and collectors. How often he has shrivelled the value of an acquisition by dubbing it a fake ! I have never heard of him dodging the truth, and many a collector who has sent for him, to be flattered by the approval of his taste, has been mortified to discover from Berenson that he had been the victim of a fraud. Some of the best private collections in our country are due to Bernard Berenson's knowledge and advice. He is very modest, however, in claiming any credit for his part in them, preferring with infinite generosity that the owner of the treasures for which he is responsible should have all the glory of their selection.

In the case of Mrs. Jack Gardner, of Boston, her friendship with Berenson dated over many years. Her early purchases were frequently made in his company. However, her own taste was so great and her power of assimilating knowledge was so extraordinary that those with whom she enjoyed any intimacy became unconsciously endowed by the wealth of her imaginings, and it is no exaggeration to state that, in the minds of the art connoisseurs of Europe, Boston is on the map merely because it is there where Mrs. Gardner lives, and it is in the Fenways where she has created an Italian palace full of the wonders of centuries. It is a monument built by herself which will stand as an everlasting tribute to her memory, and to her vision. Like the Duc d'Aumale, who bequeathed Chantilly to his nation, so will this Museum of Art pass some day to the city of Boston to become its glory and its pride.

No woman in the world was ever possessed of such human radio as Isabella Gardner. In recent years she has led a very secluded life, only admitting her old friends at intervals. Her mind is as brilliant as ever, and her interests as keen. Doubtless she feels that she must husband her precious hours as the glass of life is turned. She knows the value of every minute of every day, and refuses to have her last years devastated by the curious or vandalised by the indolent. She will die as she has lived, a very great lady.

I remember a typical incident connected with Perugia.

After a long day spent in and about Assisi, where we revelled in the memories of blessed Saint Francis, whose spirit still walks upon the earth, we retired to rest, our rooms in the hotel facing a terrace which was evidently the popular resort of the town.

While realising, when our lights were extinguished, that many of the inhabitants were still upon the stone benches, we were totally unprepared for the noises which grew and grew as the night went on. Each time that we looked out of our windows we saw that the crowd was denser. Babies in arms, children who were toddling, youth, and old age, all had poured into the square. It was unbearable. Did these people of Perugia never sleep? Or did they play all night and rest all day? One thing was certain: we would move away as soon as possible, for evidently any peace in this Italian town was out of the question.

At seven o'clock in the morning we summoned the proprietor, upbraiding him for having given us such impossible accommodations. Wringing his hands in apology, the good man assured us that the incidents of the night were unusual. He explained everything by telling us that it had been prophesied in the local paper that this was the date set for the end of the world; that the citizens of Perugia, firmly believing this, had decided that it would be pleasanter to assemble in the public square and there to die together. Besides, once in the open, they might have a chance to persuade the Almighty to deal gently with them, whereas to remain in their houses would make them victims of falling brick and crashing timber, and preclude any direct intercourse with God, who ruled from behind the stars.

I remember once remarking to Berenson that I was surprised at never finding any variety of cultivated small fruits in Italy. I missed the peaches and the pears and the pictorial apples trained upon the garden walls of France. "You need not be surprised," replied my friend, "the care of fruits requires infinite attention and persistent labour. The Italians are far

too lazy to be bothered with the growth of anything which means work. It is true that they grow babies because they look to the future when these same babies will emigrate to the United States, become rich, and support their parents and relations who remain in Italy."

Padua and Venice will always be associated in my mind with a friend who is as little of an Italian in her composition as is any woman I know. She is none other than Mrs. Frances Wolcott, widow of the late Senator Edward Wolcott of Colorado. She insists that she saw the first white child born in Denver. Whether this is a flight of her athletic imagination or not is really of no consequence. The fact remains that she is the closest electrical connection I know between Pike's Peak and the Grand Canal, for my most vivid impressions of Venice were gleaned during a visit I made there many years ago.

Frances Wolcott has without exception the most alive brain I have ever encountered. No matter on which side one strikes it, a spark will flash therefrom. She is an intellectual so tempered with the human that at times one is lulled into forgetfulness that she *is* intellectual. Her sympathies are ever flowing. She carries perpetual spring in her soul. Her spirit never flags, her interest never drags. Her activity conquers age because her body is always forced to run after her mind. She is an inveterate traveller in her insatiate thirst for a knowledge which she promptly assimilates, and which afterwards she will dispense with prodigality.

We drifted along the canals, and we enjoyed those hours in Italy together. It is true that these same conversations as a rule might have taken place in the 20th Century, Limited, or before the Club fire in New York, because we both had acquired the habit of taking our thoughts around with us. They did not depend upon any environment. Our comments at the Lido might have been inspired at Coney Island or at Revere Beach, the only difference being that at the Lido there was more surface to cover and a more marked indifference to the social amenities of life.

Mrs. Wolcott, like many very dominant women of history, never attracted admirers consistent with any historical chart, for she will probably go on attracting them so long as she lives. She has not had her face mutilated by surgeons, claiming that youth can be perennial. Neither has she enriched the purveyors of creams and cosmetics. It has been told of her when one gentleman especially assiduous in his attentions, arrived to call, that she insisted upon dragging him out in the searching sunlight, exclaiming: "Now look at me! Count every wrinkle you can find. Note every blemish that is revealed, then you will know the worst, and I need not fear the deception caused by a pink lamp-shade or a twilight symphony."

The story is very characteristic of my friend. It may serve as an encouragement to women who are willing to grow old normally. Are there any of them left? I sometimes wonder.

Mrs. Wolcott's little journeys into the realm of faith were humorous. I had urged her going with me to Padua to visit the tomb of our blessed Saint Anthony. She had with an almost girlish sentiment been restlessly awaiting a letter. I insisted that, if only she could muster enough confidence while touching the tomb at Padua to humbly ask the saint's kindly intervention, possibly upon her return to Venice the long-desired letter might have reached its destination. This sincere gesture succeeded beyond my fondest hope, and great was the triumph of credulity over scepticism when, upon alighting from our gondola, the precious epistle was handed to her.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE circumstances under which I made my first trip into Spain are worth relating.

Miss de Wolfe and Miss Morgan had arranged to go there by train, under the guidance of a friend who was thoroughly familiar with the country. They were further provided with letters of introduction which would open every door, and they could already boast of the acquaintance of several influential Spaniards who had visited the Villa Trianon at Versailles.

It was very warm weather, and while they kindly urged me to accompany them, a long, hot railway journey did not appeal to me. The only travelling I could contemplate at that season was by motor-car.

I went to the station and saw them off. The evening was sultry, so that as I turned away I congratulated myself upon my wisdom.

I returned to Versailles, but the next day the Spanish microbe seemed to have entered my veins. Why shouldn't I follow my friends? We had a fine Panhard limousine and a reliable chauffeur. Why not utilise both?

I spoke of my project, but was told by everyone that I was mad. How could I dare risk a journey of this kind alone and unprotected into a country of bandits and brigands? Besides, I didn't speak the language and I didn't know the roads.

The more I thought of this excursion, the more I rejoiced in the idea.

I bought the maps, laid out my route, and on a bright

morning, accompanied by my faithful maid, I turned my face toward sunny Spain.

The trip was full of charm, but devoid of incident, although it developed into a kind of pilgrimage, visiting as I did the little towns made famous by the venerable Curé d'Ars, St. Vincent de Paul, and others whose history savours of holy tradition.

I had never been at Lourdes, so it seemed to me that this was my opportunity. We arrived at this noted shrine at twilight, so that my first tour of the place was made by moonlight under a canopy of stars.

I confess that I rather dreaded the impression I was to receive. I assumed that I would be surrounded by beggars and extortionists. I took it for granted that the sanctity of the spot would be dwarfed by its commercial aspect. I dreaded the crowds of tourists and the army of sightseers. I did not realise that all of these fears would fall like a pack of cards once I came to understand the spirit which pervades every corner of Lourdes. I was not drawn there through my emotions but through a desire to see this place for myself and to learn the truth at first hand.

I had so often discussed its cures with scientists as well as with pilgrims, nevertheless, once upon the spot, impressions forced themselves upon my mind with an intensity for which I was unprepared.

Much that had been told as of importance seemed to me trivial amid the surroundings which I found. The physical condition of those seeking relief did not strike me as abnormal. Whether their prayers were answered, whether their ills were assuaged, did not seem of vital consequence, for underneath all that was external I recognised a power which was pervading and impelling, that something which was destined to draw all men under its influence.

Thus it is not strange that I left there after seeing three miraculous cures, not so profoundly interested in these isolated cases as in the underlying faith which prayed for them. When

thousands of human voices are raised in a simultaneous appeal to Almighty God, attuned with a confidence which is superhuman, one is involuntarily lifted to a height hitherto unknown. And when one sees some dying creature raise his head at the approach of the Holy Eucharist, his countenance illuminated with the beauty of a spiritual vision such as you have never seen before, you realise that he is literally looking into the face of God, so that when his final moment of earthly disintegration comes, you know that death for him is merely a passing, that here there is nothing, while beyond there is everything.

I was at last able to understand what Monsignor Benson meant when he said that of all places in the world Lourdes was the place where he wished to die. It seems the natural bridge between this life and the next.

For many years the majority of the cures had taken place in the piscina adjoining the Sacred Grotto of Our Lady, but at the time of my visit the miracles occurred at the moment of Benediction in the late afternoon, when the solemn procession, led by the clergy bearing aloft the jewelled monstrance containing the Host, passed around the esplanade chanting the "Ave-Ave," the whole square blocked with the hand-carriages and the stretchers which were bearing the sick and suffering to be present at this wonderful moment.

When I asked one of the nursing Nuns how she explained the fact that the cures no longer took place at the Grotto, she replied: "I think, dear Madame, that it is because our Blessed Lady has withdrawn behind her Beloved Son."

After a few days at San Sebastian, where I saw the King on his way to a bull-fight, and a canary bird which was so tame that he flew at his pleasure in and out of the window of his owner, we pushed on toward Madrid amid scenery as rich in colour as is our own Grand Cañon of Arizona. Nowhere can one see such red and purple, blue and yellow villages as are to be found in Northern Spain. They hang upon the hillside, they stud the plain; they seem uninhabited, unquestioned, and

satisfying, serving as decoration while filling their picturesque destiny.

I paused at Loyola, the rich community of the Jesuits, the birthplace of their founder and containing the archives of their order. It was mediæval and interesting.

I had an easy system of making myself understood and of getting what I wanted without knowing the language of the country. The method which I followed was simplicity itself. I took the phrase-book, found the words and the sentences which would serve my purpose, and then underlined them, pointing them out to the persons I would address while asking them to reply in a like fashion. I avoided any attempt at pronunciation, for I believe this is the invariable pitfall. Nothing is more misleading to an unimaginative ear than words mispronounced. Inevitable shouting results, which merely emphasises the incorrectness, whereas the printed words must be correct. Thus I was never embarrassed either in ordering my meals, buying my gasoline, asking the way, or inviting assistance.

It all went smoothly until I found myself five miles out of Madrid upon a road which beggared description. Even the cows could have beaten down a smoother surface with their hoofs. To go beyond a snail's pace was impossible, yet, despite our crawling, one spring after another broke, until our car was ignominiously towed into the city of Madrid, the capital of Spain.

CHAPTER XXXV

WHEN the Scriptures state that "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction," the highways in Spain must have been in mind, for never have I encountered such unnecessary width combined with such necessary repair. I had several conversations with a member of the King's Cabinet, the Marquis de Vegas Inclín, who was at the head of this particular public service. He recognised that no government could afford to keep such highways in order. On the other hand, he affirmed that as broad roads had dated from time immemorial it would be a long work of education before the people would accept any other kind. Reforms move slowly in Spain.

On reaching Madrid I went at once to the Ritz Hotel, there to await the arrival of my two friends, who, having gone to Seville and Grenada, were not expected for several days.

I did a lot of sightseeing in the interval, and took a real delight as a proof of my enterprising spirit to send my card to their apartment, which was reserved directly after I ascertained that they were there.

Our meeting was one of merriment, and for many a long day I boasted of my pleasant journey down. I need not add that I had plenty of company on my return trip.

We presented our letters of introduction and were showered with consequent hospitality. Private collections rarely shown were the excuse for many an afternoon tea to which we were invited by the stately owners.

We were delightfully entertained in Toledo, which is a short though exceedingly bumpy drive from Madrid. The one thing which left an indelible impression upon us all was that

we saw the beautiful tapestries, furniture, and art objects in the places for which they had been originally destined, for the most priceless treasures of Spain are still in the land of their birth—a rare condition these days.

However, my crowning impression is of a private Mass, in the Royal Chapel, to which we were bidden on the Feast of Corpus Christi. The hour was ten o'clock, the invited guests were few. We were there in good time, and found a special escort awaiting us at the private entrance. We went through a series of corridors until we reached the one which led directly to the chapel. There we were asked to stand. Promptness being a virtue of kings, in a very few minutes we heard the announcement that His Majesty was approaching. The cortège was the most brilliant I have ever witnessed. The ladies of the Court were all in full evening dress and resplendent in jewels. Many of the men were in uniform, their breasts glittering with orders, and their swords of the finest workmanship.

None wore a hat save one group composed, as it was explained to us, of the *grandees* of Spain—men of noble ancestry, who alone were permitted to remain covered. Never in my life have I seen such a gathering of courtly gentlemen. Distinction of bearing was conspicuous. They seemed a natural part of the historical surroundings. All that is best of inheritance in this world seemed in them to find its focus. The impression they made was profound.

The Queen was in white satin brocade covered with superb old lace. She carried a white missal in her hand.

The King wore a white uniform with elaborate gold braiding demanded by his high military rank.

His smile was cordial, and as he passed, recognising that we were the three American ladies for whom invitations had been solicited, he bowed to us in a very gracious fashion.

After the procession entered the chapel we were taken to one of the few boxes, from which our view of the ceremony was uninterrupted. Never shall I forget the brilliant aspect

of the audience. The Royal couple were on the throne. The lords and ladies of the Court seemed a sea of colour. Their jewels gave forth light, their uniforms and costumes made of marvellous tissues rippled in waves of various tints.

The Royal orchestra furnished the music, while choristers, trained to perfection, alternately sung and chanted the cadences and chorals of the Mass.

Below and on the right of the High Altar, which was ablaze with a myriad candles, sat the Cardinal of Toledo, clad in his scarlet robes with cape of ermine across his shoulders. He was directly opposite the throne, which was at the left of the altar.

The most dramatic note, however, of the occasion was struck by one solitary figure in black who stood by the side of the Queen. He was tall and slight, of intellectual and impressive bearing. This one dark element in the midst of light that was well-nigh blinding was the Jesuit confessor of the Queen—a silent reminder that the vanities of this world would ultimately pass away.

A very pretty anecdote was told of King Alfonso while we were in Madrid which demonstrated his boyishness and his democracy.

A *festa* in his honour was taking place in Seville. A great banquet, at which he was the Royal guest, was in process in the suburbs. A general holiday had been declared. The whole city was in gala.

Suddenly the King, becoming weary of food and of speeches, jumped from his seat, and, turning to his pal, the Duc d'Albe, exclaimed: "Jimmy, I'll match you for a race as far as the water over yonder."

Off the two young men started; but "Jimmy" soon preferred a cigarette, and sat by the wayside until his distinguished friend had run off his energy. The King, on the contrary, rushed into a field where an old peasant was ploughing with the aid of his faithful donkey.

"Ah, my good man!" cried the King, "how is it that you are not making merry in the town? This is no day for work."

"That may be," answered the peasant, "but this beast and I cannot spare time for foolishness. We must live."

"How much do you earn a day?" asked the King.

"Six pesetas."

"Don't you want to see the King?"

"Not enough to lose that much money."

By this time the King was thoroughly enjoying the situation. He pulled a handful of coins from his pocket, threw them into the man's hands, and exclaimed: "This will pay you for your time; besides, you can see the King without its costing you a penny, for here he is, standing before you!"

The old peasant fell upon his knees; the donkey wagged his tail. King Alfonso ran up the hill, having enjoyed the incident as the most entertaining moment of the day.

Probably no monarch in the world is more popular with his people than is Alfonso of Spain.

He is a good husband, a good father, and a kind and intelligent ruler. He is an all-around sport, is full of fun, has infinite tact, and on more than one occasion has proved himself a man of unusual physical courage.

Spain remained a neutral country during the war. She, like Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, kept out of it. At the time this neutrality was criticised and condemned; nevertheless, recent events fail to demonstrate that these countries have lost any of their prestige through their detachment.

Economically, Spain only needs more water in order to enormously increase her wealth. If all her arid fields could once be irrigated there would be no limit to her potentialities.

Before many years this will no longer be a dream of the government, but a fact. Just as we have the great Roosevelt Dam in our country, there will be the Alfonso Dam in Spain. Once this feat of costly engineering is accomplished, the long stretches of useless soil will be converted into vast fields of waving grain, and Spain will become one of the richest nations in the world.

CHAPTER XXXVI

GREAT singers have always been centres of attraction to the multitude. A certain glamour seems to envelop them. They focus attention even when they fail to excite admiration.

There is an air of mystery attached to them. When they pass into the opera house they are invariably muffled up. It is rare that anything but their eyes are seen, because as a rule they are thickly veiled. The prima donna grand manner is conspicuous as they bow to the curious crowd with benevolent condescension.

This is as much a part of their training as is the vocal scale. It composes well. Too much familiarity is dangerous. Then the days when they sing! Draughts and visitors are to be equally avoided. Even if the rôle of the evening is one in which they have been seen hundreds of times, the same atmosphere of nervous apprehension must be enacted, the same husbanding of strength must be proclaimed. We are told that the voice is a delicate organ, yet these ladies never hesitate to use it when making scenes off the stage, and how easily little things excite them. Ye Gods!

Nevertheless, in a long acquaintance with the profession, I have found them to be much more rational and sensible than they would allow the public to imagine. When once you know them well enough, they stop acting and posing, especially when they realise that you have no time for their tantrums.

The first prima donna with whom I was ever really thrown

was Clara Louise Kellogg, and a good sort she was. She and her mother were inseparable. Their home was in America. They never acquired the foreign habit.

In her youth Clara Louise was lovely to look upon, but in later years the pleasures of the table proved too strong for her to resist; thus, as she grew older her slimness became a page from the past.

I remember that Mrs. Kellogg had a rooted mistrust of everything French, especially of French morals.

On one occasion, meeting her in a Paris hotel, she informed me that her daughter had been offered an engagement at the Grand Opera, "but," said the old lady, "you know what that means, dearie; here a girl sings to-night and loses her reputation to-morrow!" It is superfluous to add that the engagement for Clara Louise was refused.

Sybil Sanderson was for a while the most alluring lyric personality. She possessed a charm which was unique. To fall in love with her became a European habit. In this country, however, she never scored any very great success.

In the beginning of her career she had little idea of acting, therefore that sterling artist, Marie Laurent, was summoned by the Maestro Saint Saëns to give Sanderson lessons in diction and in gesture; but, when Madame Laurent arrived in the studio, she found pupil and teacher so absorbed in each other that it was some minutes before they were alive to her presence. To give a lesson under such circumstances was well-nigh impossible. Every few minutes Saint Saëns would turn suddenly to Sanderson, clasp her in his arms, and exclaim: "My child, I adore you! I must embrace you. You are an angel!" A few more bars of music. Another osculatory interruption. Madame Laurent never attempted further instruction.

Mary Garden shot into Paris like a meteor, and became the rage at the Opéra Comique. She was the cherished protégé of two great men, Albert Carré and André Messager, who were the joint directors of the Théâtre Lyrique. Garden was a

born actress. Somehow I always regretted that her fine voice had robbed the stage of a great star.

Madame Nordica, whom I met often in my journeyings, was devoid of affectation. She was a very fine artist, but very simple withal. Her heart was as generous as her voice was wide of range. Her kindness to students, her encouragement of talent, were proverbial. When she died her plans to establish a school of music were still in embryo. She retained the beauty of her art to the end.

Nordica's career demonstrated the power of work, for she had not been endowed at birth with a vocal organ of any supreme quality. How often have I heard her say that it was to hard work alone that she owed her success! She had just plodded on, conquering one difficulty after another. She was a woman of remarkable intelligence and of indefatigable industry. Her courage was dauntless, her persistency infinite and her energy inexhaustible. I know of no artist who stands as a more commendable example to this generation than Madame Nordica.

But the most original and fascinating singer I have ever known is Emma Calvé. She has written her life, but she could never write her personality. She is meridional, as is her art. Early in her career, while turning her back upon traditions, she established them. Her "Carmen" became her very own. It has been imitated, but never equalled. The impress of herself was stamped upon every rôle she sang. Her vitality is as great to-day as ever. There is no dwindling of strength, no dwarfing of energy. She belongs to that generation which refuses to die while living. Her feet have never dragged wearily through experience. Tears and laughter were never concealed. Emotions were always genuine while they lasted.

I recall one of her early visits to this country when the dictaphone was a new invention. At that time she cherished a romantic attachment for a certain well-known man of letters whom she had left behind in Paris.

When I called at her hotel I found her absorbed in making records. Several rolls were ready to be posted to her admirer, while each week she received a corresponding roll from him. Not a bad idea for the transmission of loving messages across a cruel sea.

Emma Calvé always has been disinterested in her sympathies. She has cared nothing about the material things of life. While liking creature comforts to a normal extent, she has never been a slave to them.

She bestows affection lavishly, and has always belonged to that type of woman who gives much more than she receives. Calvé would have made a wonderful mother—almost as wonderful as Sarah Bernhardt, which is saying much. I can recall one episode in her life, when upon the eve of matrimony she was accused of avarice by the prospective husband. She at once broke off the engagement, rushed from Paris and conveyed a very large sum of money to a near relation.

At least this impulsive act would serve to prove to the deserted suitor that she, Calvé, was not a worshipper of gold nor a hoarder of capital!

This anecdote is very characteristic of this lovable and temperamental woman. Like Nordica, Calvé is generous to a fault. Only last season, during her extended concert tour, she had found so many young women who excited her sympathy that at the end of the journey she had invited no fewer than fifteen to go to her Château of Cabrières, and there to spend the summer as her guests, proposing to give them free instruction while with her. Not only did she feel that she could develop their voices, but above all that she could give them rosy cheeks and needed strength. "Poor children! They all looked so tired and so pale. I know what the air of my country will do for them."

Fortunately, however, when the date of sailing arrived, many of these young people were kept at home by parents who had not yet agreed to their following the operatic profession as a means of livelihood.

Emma Calvé is not a rich woman. She gives and gives again. Above all, she never sings her miseries. This is her motto. She always says the kindly word. She always suppresses the unkind criticism. Her best song is ever in her soul.

CHAPTER XXXVII

I HAVE often motored through the country of Calvé's birth, and have readily understood her loyal admiration of it. All that stretch of the real South of France is full of beauty, and rich in history. This is not confined to those "sunny places for shady people," such as Cannes, and Nice and Monte Carlo, but it is studded with wayside, historical villages like Les Saintes Maries, where one finds a two-storied church, the upper part of it dedicated to Catholic worship while the lower hall is the centre of an annual gypsy pilgrimage, where thousands flock to crown the king of their choice.

Then near Arles is that deserted town known as Les Baux, which to-day is beautified by its ruins; and Avignon, that Palace of the Popes, which even now challenges a flattering comparison with the Vatican, which at one period it threatened to supplant.

If only Americans would desert Paris for France, how different would be their viewpoint, and how much greater their understanding! Yet there are thousands who know practically nothing of the country they profess to love beyond those resorts where they keep on meeting each other. Even the Cook's tourists acquire a more intelligent appreciation of French manners, customs and history than do many of our compatriots, to whom the Rue de la Paix is their pilgrimage and the trip to Versailles or to Fontainebleau their only objective.

The one criticism against the latter place is that it is on the wrong side of Paris. To get out of the city necessitates miles of street and of suburban ugliness, and until one is well

on the road the itinerary is devoid of charm. Of course, Fontainebleau itself, with its magnificent forests, is full of beauty and of interest, and before we had settled at Versailles many were the excursions which we enjoyed in that neighbourhood.

I remember a party of us once going down there to spend a week-end when economy was in order. None of us felt that we could afford the fascinating and famous Hôtel de France et d'Angleterre.

There was one of minor pretensions, however, which was an extensive advertiser of its advantages. As the prices there were much more moderate, we arrived with our bags, deciding that before unpacking them we would test the food, a very sensible precaution, as it afterwards turned out.

I was to order the dinner, which was a proof of confidence on the part of my friends. The patron of the hostelry welcomed us effusively, assuring us that we should be cared for as never before in our lives. Upon my inquiry as to the possibility of a good dinner, I was assured that everything would be of the best. As he described the menu the dishes became savoury and succulent to our imagination. We could hardly wait for the announcement that the ladies were served.

With a great flourish the soup was set before us. It was anæmic and tepid. Yet we refused to be so promptly discouraged.

A long pause, when suddenly, as the next dish appeared, the odour which filled the room was penetrating in its vile-ness. What could it be? A large fish was uncovered, and the stench was understood. Never before had I realised how bad a fish could be. The chef who had prepared it must have been impervious to smells.

We arose from the table and fled with one accord into the open air. The patron pursued us, voluble in his apology. I poured upon him the vials of my wrath. He insisted that this carp had been taken from the fountain in front of the hotel only one hour before dinner, and that he would swear upon

the cross of his mother that the smell was normal, and that the fish was fresh.

"My good man," said I, "I have understood from the guide-books that the carp in Fontainebleau live to a ripe old age, that they even date from the time of François I^r. I have always doubted this story, but to-night I believe it. I am convinced that the carp which you have just presented to us is historical. It could belong to any epoch!"

That night we slept in the good hotel, whose virtues we knew and whose prices we ignored. We determined that the question of money should not disturb our week-end enjoyment and, incidentally, our digestion.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the women of Arles are among the most beautiful in the world.

They are tall as a rule, strong and well proportioned. Their features are regular. They are Junoesque of type. They walk with freedom. Their balance is perfect. Their costume is rich in colour and resplendent in ornament.

My first glimpse of them was on a Sunday as they were returning from a bull-fight in the arena. They were dressed *en gala*. But the men struck me as rather inferior—in appearance, at any rate. Perhaps, however, they rule the ladies with kindness rather than with force.

In that country of the poet Mistral, one would be disappointed not to experience a bit of that wind which, were it mingled with snow and sleet, would resemble our own jovial blizzard.

One struck us in Avignon as we were turning a street corner, and for some seconds our automobile literally tilted from side to side in way which distinctly threatened to upset its normal equilibrium.

Mistral, that rare poet of Provence, was pointed out to me on a fête day, which was being celebrated at Nîmes. He was hatless, but, in the eyes of his beloved neighbours, stood before them always crowned by his genius, which had been recognised the world over.

He had in his later years become the centre of pilgrimages. People of eminence sought him out ; men of culture longed to meet him. The very simplicity of his life invited curiosity. But he refused to be either dislodged or disturbed. He pursued his righteous calling in the solitude of his hills. As a creator of beautiful verse, he bequeathed this as his testament to a prosaic world.

In motoring through this southern country one must exact neither comfort nor cleanliness, and only remember that air is a great purifier. Rules of health become a myth. Laws of hygiene are forgotten. Every sanitary prejudice is set aside. Plumbing is a superfluous luxury. Fleas and flies refuse to become germ-carriers. Possibly this all exemplifies what the survival of the fittest can really mean. Nowhere does one hear that French finality more frequently than in this land of olives, of grapes and of perpetual sunshine, for the reply to one's wonderment at the lack of civilised progress is the unvarying answer: "It is so. What can one do?"

A wine-drinking yet temperate people are these folks of the South. They are the best advocates in the world for temperance as opposed to prohibition.

Nothing is more picturesque in early September than to meet the queer little wagons as they drone along the high road on the way to the wine presses, all filled to overflowing with the purple grapes which have been freshly gathered.

No one is ever in a hurry. No one disturbs his views by reading. Here people are born with their minds made up. Why should they become disordered !

One of the most illustrative caricatures of the war was furnished by that inimitable humorist, Forain, who pictured two men meeting at Montpelier. The one from the district, playfully tapping his friend from St. Quentin on the shoulder, exclaimed: "Ah, old boy, it seems that you are fighting up there in the North. What is it all about?"

In this same connection it might be interesting to add that, when the French colonial troops reached Marseilles, their

first station in France, that they insisted upon loading their guns and firing right and left. They had come a long way to kill something. Why not begin at once and make short work of the killing ?

The grim context of this little anecdote is that thousands went into the war in a spirit no less ignorant. They were fighting for what ? They were asked to kill for what ? They were there for what ? It was all a brutal enigma, which even to-day causes no little confusion in the minds of many of the participants who have survived the toll exacted by this slaughter house.

It was looking across a quiet field at Tarbes, where hundreds of harmless sheep were grazing, that I first witnessed the trial of poison-gas. In one second the whole flock lay prostrate. Through diabolical human invention they had been robbed of life, which only God Almighty had the power to bestow. It was God who had given, but it was man who had taken. The experiment was to prove its value as a weapon of destruction. There was naught of healing nor of help in its vapours. And the prayer which at that moment rose instinctively to my lips was that one uttered centuries ago upon Calvary :

“ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

CHAPTER XXXVIII

IN England the attitude toward the stage grew more and more conservative. A censor in London acted with rigour. I recall once when Madame Réjane was about to produce one of her most successful plays, the license was refused because a certain amount of frisky kicking was called for in her rôle. It was only after Réjane had promised that the raising of her leg would not exceed twelve inches from the floor that the license was granted.

The inconsistencies of these rulings were a frequent cause of surprise and of comment. It became more and more difficult to anticipate the censor's attitude. Plays introducing the clergy which were at all trivial in dialogue or which embodied a pronounced comedy atmosphere were condemned. Characters introduced from the Holy Scriptures were forbidden. Since those days the pendulum has certainly swung far the other way.

I recall a poster of "Zaza" prepared by Mrs. Lewis Waller's manager, prior to her provincial tour in this play. It depicted Mrs. Waller before her piano and an open hymnal. At her side stood her twelve-year-old daughter, who was energetically singing "Nearer My God to Thee." The scene was elaborately reproduced on the three sheets.

I always wondered how the gullible public had reconciled the story with this poster. The only explanation in my mind was that they saw the latter prior to the play, which justified their purchase of tickets; and that after the evening's enjoyment, shocked though they may have been, that then they were inspired to pray for poor "Zaza's" redemption and to hope

that finally she might draw near that heaven which the hymn described.

C. Haddon Chambers was one of the most successful playwrights of this time. His sense of comedy was unerring, although his treatment of drama was as a rule sure fire. Beginning with "Captain Swift" which part here was played by Maurice Barrymore, he wrote "Passersby," "The Tyranny of Tears," "Tante," "A Modern Magdalene," "John o' Dreams," "The Idler," "The Fatal Card," etc.

A more delightful companion than Chambers could not be found. He was universally popular.

No matter what his income might be, he always lived beyond it. When he was down on his luck only those who enjoyed lending him money ever guessed it. His clothes were perfect. His appearance immaculate. No one could equal him in the art of ordering a lunch or a dinner. He was never a prolific writer. He indulged himself in long intervals of relaxation between plays. Trips to the Riviera and to St. Moritz he took as a matter of course.

His first marriage was a mistake, but Chambers never consented to any divorce. I always felt that this fact was due more to the law of self-preservation than to principle. His freedom might have proved very embarrassing. The consciousness that there was a legal Mrs. Chambers in the background gave him a great sense of security.

After her death, however, he surprised his friends by marrying a young and very attractive girl, who took excellent care of him during the last months of his life. He was always a devoted father to his one child, a daughter, so possibly the paternal instinct was in a measure responsible for his second choice.

Hall Caine (since knighted) became famous as a novelist before he wrote for the stage. He is one of the few authors who has successfully dramatised his own stories. I have always felt that sincerity was the secret of Hall Caine's popularity. He believes what he writes, and personally endorses every lofty sentiment which his characters express.

While he has proved himself excellent "copy" for the press, while he has generously contributed his opinion of current events, while he has provoked controversy and invoked criticism, while he has disagreed with Marie Corelli, and challenged even the bishops, Hall Caine has persistently given to the world his best from his standpoint.

There have been many who have sought to imitate his style. They have tried to duplicate his drama, but miserable unsuccess has been the result.

An amazing fact about plays is that whatever may be their form the public scents immediately any trick played at its expense.

The author who writes melodrama must be sincere or his play will fail. He must take himself seriously.

It is only the satirist whose trade is to mock who can indulge himself in making fun of his public. He has often no other way in which to make fun for them.

My one impression of Marie Corelli was gleaned in a visit I paid her in historical Stratford, where she lives. I journeyed there from London to have luncheon at her suggestion. She was perennially youthful in appearance, and caustic in conviction. Her personality was very feminine, but when she spoke one detected nothing of the clinging vine.

She was very deceptive in appearance. She was too intelligent ever to under-estimate her values. I never in my life will forget her garden of annunciation lilies. Great masses of this odorous flower filled the entire space. The spot was full of suggested romance and of convenient plot. Corelli's passionate heroines must have been born there, and at moments when she did not require their presence I am sure that they remained on the benches awaiting her telephone call.

In great contrast was the garden of Mrs. Humphry Ward, full of the lovely herbaceous varieties so integral to the composition. In still greater contrast does my crystal ball reveal the personality of the two ladies in question.

Mrs. Humphry Ward, a daughter of Thomas Arnold, who

was a son of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, represented to me not only the stability of English literature, but of English thought and of English life. There was no wavering in the integrity of her appearance, no compromise in the definiteness of her taste, and no departure from the traditions of that England which must be universally respected even when not universally loved.

Mrs. Ward, however, was a fine example of a British matron. Her rare intellect always percolated modestly through her kindly personality.

I shall always recall with gratitude her gracious hospitality, which I so enjoyed and appreciated.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE recent death of Sarah Bernhardt makes my crystal ball reflect memories which cover a period of many, many years. It was at the hospitable table of Victorien Sardou where I first met this great woman of her century. His was the genius which at that time was supplying her with her dramatic material. His plays, written for her, followed each other in successful sequence, and included "Gismonda," "La Tosca," and "Theodora."

It was a remarkable partnership. Two strong wills, two brilliant intellects, two marvellous personalities—a combination which was richly productive, although not always harmonious. Their sincere admiration and affection for each other alternated with exasperation, stubbornness and active dislike. The storm at intervals swept across the desert of their disappointments, yet ended invariably in restored tranquillity and in renewed confidence.

I remember one incident illustrative of this recurrent conflict.

There was a speech in "Gismonda" which Sardou refused to cut, although Bernhardt begged and implored him to do so. At the final rehearsal she appeared in the theatre giving every evidence of lassitude, while speaking hardly above a whisper. Pointing to her throat, she murmured: "Complete loss of voice. I cannot utter."

During that entire day she was inaudible. The following night was the general rehearsal, at which all of the critics and élite of Paris would be present.

In the meanwhile Sardou, through his emissaries, found that Sarah was always in the same condition. She would never be able to appear! His property would be wrecked. Something drastic had to be done. Convinced as he was that the only remedy was in his hands and not in her physicians', Sardou waited until four o'clock in the afternoon, when, scenting no yielding on her part, cut out the objectionable lines and rushed off a messenger to her house with the speech revised according to her wish.

It is needless to say that Sarah forthwith recovered her voice, appeared triumphant in the theatre, and gave a performance of such brilliancy that the success of the play was assured.

I must add that Sardou's vocabulary on this occasion was rich in invectives, ending, however, with a sly look of intense appreciation as he said: "Never mind. She is adorable, and there is only one Sarah in the world."

How often did I sit by his side watching her rehearse! Her work was her life, yet no actress I have ever known possessed a tenth of her intellectual vigour. Her mind was as pliable as her talent. She had travelled everywhere, she had absorbed everything.

The men for whom she had experienced a sentimental interest in her life were as a rule men of rare endowment. She never suffered fools. She was only intolerant of vacuity and of idiocy.

I was thrown with her frequently not only in Paris, but in London and here. I once supped with Mrs. Patrick Campbell and herself after the theatre. Both ladies had had a strenuous evening, but were in great form as they were planning a performance of "Pelléas and Mélisande" for some benefit.

Whenever fellow-artists proposed this kind of combination to Bernhardt she invariably fell back either upon the play in question or upon a scene from "Hamlet," strongly advising that the other star should play "Ophelia" to her "Hamlet."

It must be admitted that very few were ever cajoled into accepting her suggestion.

Mrs. Campbell had Ninky-Poo with her—a very intrusive and diminutive canine whom she insisted upon putting in the middle of the supper-table, to which Bernhardt strenuously objected, despite her love for animals.

Each time that she attempted to remove Ninky-Poo he snapped and he snarled with villainous intent, until finally Sarah, in her most alluring manner, asked me, acting as interpreter, to convey to "Mrs. Pat" that she longed to give her a souvenir of the visit, but that the table must be cleared so that the presentation might take place.

The dog was deposited on a chair, Sarah left the room, returning with a small morocco case in which lay an Egyptian ring. Pressing it upon the finger of the English star, Bernhardt begged me to explain that it contained a drop of water from the deluge. Tears of joy coursed over Mrs. Campbell's discreet make-up, hands were clasped in affectionate sympathy, Ninky-Poo began to bark, his mistress was for a moment diverted, while Sarah confided to me that this priceless object had been purchased for a few francs by Robert de Montesquiou, who had invented the story which she had just passed on.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, with her delightful and unfailing sense of humour, was, I am convinced, never for a moment deceived. The whole scene merely meant that I had assisted at a comedy in the making.

Bernhardt's physique was extraordinary. I can summarise a certain twenty-four hours in illustration of this.

It was on a Saturday, the last day of her London season. She had made a flying trip to Brighton to give a *matinée*. That night she appeared before a crowded theatre at which the Royalties were present. At twelve she went on to the New Club, where after supper she recited a monologue. The following day, Sunday, she crossed to Boulogne, where she gave a gala performance that night.

I rarely remember hearing her complain of a fatigue

so great as to interfere with her work. At times her energy seemed superhuman, and never was this more dominant than during the last years of her life, when disease was being fought, and where disqualifications of age and of illness were being contested. I recall the shudder when first I learned of the loss of her limb, but later I became accustomed to it, chiefly because Sarah herself treated this so lightly. I can hear her voice saying now from an adjoining room, "Patience, my dear Marbury; I will soon hop into you."

She travelled with a large trunk especially made to hold her collection of artificial limbs, of which she had at least a dozen, sent to her by every inventor in the world. She resorted to any device rather than wear one of them. On the stage, as in private life, she preferred to ignore their existence. In "l'Aiglon," however, she was forced to accept this mechanical solution of her problem, which fact explains why she played the rôle rarely during her latter years.

Her dread of being anything but herself was accentuated beyond description. When she lay at the Mt. Sinai Hospital in a very feeble condition, awaiting a major operation which was found to be necessary, the surgeons urged her to submit to a transfusion of blood. She stoutly refused to accept their suggestion. Arguments were in vain, persuasion useless.

"No!" said Bernhardt, "if my moment has come to die, I am ready. If I am to live, I wish to live as Sarah Bernhardt, without the blood of anyone else coursing through my veins."

This attitude was wholly characteristic. Her individualism was too pronounced to admit of its ever being tampered with. The word "compromise" must have been omitted from her dictionary.

I remember my first visit to the hospital ten days after the operation. I shall never forget the picture when I stepped gently into the room. My manner had been composed for the occasion. I felt that I must creep softly to her bedside, whisper a few words of sympathy and then silently withdraw. On the contrary, I found her gay and buoyant, propped up on

lace pillows with a diaphanous confection of pink and old gold around her shoulders, a piece of Genoese velvet serving as the counterpane, while the foot of the bed was made into a screen of American beauty roses. In the corners tall white lilacs. Flowers everywhere, and the room flooded in afternoon sunshine.

I exclaimed in admiration while voicing my congratulations, which were very sincere.

"Ah!" she cried, "look at my flowers! How much better to use them around my bed than over my coffin!"

I then became conscious of youthful figures flitting about in the adjoining room.

She noted my surprise, and said: "You have just come in time. My kind friends, Mlles. Boué Sœurs, have brought up their spring models and their pretty young women to wear them. I am to have a fashion show for my own especial benefit."

The beautiful gowns were duly exhibited. Sarah was kind and generous to the two mannequins. At intervals she clapped her hands in admiration. Who in the world could ever have imagined that she had passed through an ordeal from which under ordinary conditions it would have taken weeks to recover!

She was indeed a law unto herself. No common rules of life could be applied to her. She was never governed by circumstances. Even the long arm of coincidence was to her a caress, never a correction.

Her dignity was at moments magnificent. Once during the war, when I was spending the day with her at Long Beach during the period of her convalescence following the operation, a card was presented to her announcing the visit of a young man bearing one of the most illustrious titles in France.

"Say to Monsieur — that Madame Sarah Bernhardt will not receive him!"

My surprise was very great. When I begged her for an explanation, she said:

"Because he did not defend his flag. Because he was a coward who hid in ambush while his nation bled!"

I may add that I have never seen this distinguished gentleman in the centre of New York drawing-rooms, accredited and admired, that I do not recall the above poignant scene.

To Sarah Bernhardt money meant less than nothing. She loathed it while she scattered it. She gave when she had it, and borrowed when she hadn't it to give.

Her safe deposit was a handbag in which she stuffed her salary. It was rarely there long enough to soil the lining.

Like so many notables of her day and generation, she literally travelled with a suite. Five or six persons usually lodged and boarded at her expense.

In her home in the Boulevard Pereire, the long refectory table was set as a rule for a dozen or more, she herself presiding at its head in an imposing arm-chair which had once been the property of a Doge of Venice.

It was literally an open house, for many of the guests were unknown to their hostess, they having been introduced by some mutual acquaintance. It was often the case of "a friend of a friend of mine."

It would have demanded a very great fortune to have withstood the inroad of such a lavish expenditure.

She was proud of her friendships with the men of talent who had crossed her path. Their influence had as a rule been formative to her own character and developing to her own art. She never failed to pay tribute to that Cæsar to whom tribute was due.

Her faith in anyone she loved was bestowed generously. It was never vulgarised by jealousy, nor was it ever disputed with a rival. She could pass on upon her royal progress, but she would never sue for a continued companionship which had been guilty of defraction.

She, like many another woman, endowed the object of her belief with qualities which they did not always possess. Probably her closing chapter of sentiment was written around a

young actor in whom she detected no inconsiderable talent. She was his guide and patron. He had come to her penniless and without a country.

She provided him with the necessities of life, and even went so far as to lend him from the overflow of her household goods so that his apartment might be furnished and made comfortable.

After returning from a fortnight's tour in the provinces, she telephoned to the youth in question, but without result. Her first kindly thought was that he might be ill. As soon as possible she dashed to his door in her motor, only to find that he had sailed for America, having previously sold all of her furniture for his own benefit.

Be it said of Bernhardt, however, that in after years she was more proud of the position he attained in his profession than she was resentful of his ingratitude and of his lack of appreciation of what she, his benefactress, had originally done for him.

Pettiness and revenge were wholly foreign to her character.

Her intellectuality while composing her treatment of her rôles was very marked.

I found once in discussing "Hamlet" with her that her study and knowledge of Shakespeare and his exponents was most profound.

She always approached her task with reverence. She was too great to be conceited and self-satisfied. I never knew the time when she was not ready to learn from those qualified to teach.

I was with Madame Bernhardt frequently during the early summer of 1918, when the days of tension were many and when she was separated from those she loved on the other side. She bled for her country through every hour of its trial. At last her son Maurice sailed on the *Lafayette* with his wife and daughter to spend a month or more with her. It was at the dangerous period, when enemy submarines were literally strewn across the ocean. Her dread of accident to her beloved made this time one of torture, for beyond every other sentiment in

life was her adoration of her son Maurice. Her greatest happiness lay in him. The anxieties he had caused her, the financial difficulties which were ever with them, were absorbed by her great overwhelming affection, which to those who knew her was always apparent. Nothing really mattered if only he were at her side. Whenever he crossed the threshold of her room her face became illuminated with affection. He was *mon fils*, and no phrase of hers uttered upon the stage held such an inflection of tenderness as did these two tiny words.

Probably no incident in the years of our friendship seems to me so worthy of telling as the following :

We had been enjoying our reminiscences of the old days in Paris, we had discussed mutual friends, many of whom had passed away, we were recalling various anecdotes of happenings in which we both had been interested, when, throwing her arm affectionately across my shoulder, she said, " Marbury " (she never addressed me by my first name), " I will show you my secret garden, my treasure-house which I never expose to anyone."

Alert with curiosity, I listened to the order given her maid, who soon appeared with a square, black lacquer box. Sarah placed it on a little table before her, then taking a small gilt key which hung from a ribbon around her neck, she unlocked it. One by one she lifted from it her " treasures," all simple souvenirs of her youth and of her little boy.

Leaves of laurel from her crown at the Conservatory, faded verses written to her by a poet long since dead, a spray of her first Communion flowers, her childish prayer-book, and, finally, a pair of baby shoes which had been worn by Maurice, and a little faded photograph of him in Scotch kilts.

The tears rolled down her face as she said : " Ah, how handsome he looked, my Maurice, dressed *en écossais* ! "

This moment will always be sacred in my memory, for never had I understood this great woman so well as when she allowed me to rest with her for this brief hour in the garden of her soul.

I saw her many times after that, but as she was borne to her last rest in Père La Chaise, the little shoes and the faded photograph were the memories which I most cherished.

The prayer of her life was answered at the moment of her death, for she was allowed to die in the arms of that son for whom she had lived, moved, and had her being.

As the bells tolled along the route of her funeral procession, the world knew that Sarah Bernhardt's place in the theatre had become a page of history, it knew that the woman whose dominant personality had illuminated her century had passed beyond recall ; but those of us who had had the privilege of her friendship realised that the soul of this mother would be eternal through the ages.

CHAPTER XL

INIMITABLE George M. Cohan once asked a man who was writing theatrical reminiscences: "Am I in our book?"

"Well—no, George," answered the writer; "I haven't mentioned you because, old boy, I was afraid you might not like my frankness."

"What the devil do I care what you say," exclaimed Cohan, "so long as you get my name in somehow!"

Now, bearing this in mind, I wish that I might refer to the many who are literally Einsteining across my crystal ball.

One cannot, however, leave the field of theatrical productions without a tribute to David Belasco, who has done more to enrich and to advance the dramatic art of this country than has any other single producer.

He was a rugged pioneer when first he journeyed eastward from the Pacific slope. He had served his apprenticeship, he knew every practical angle of the business—he wrote plays because he knew of no other form of expression. Drama was intuitive to him. It was the one language which he spoke, and the most forceful language which he understood.

Success came to him early in life. He has done much to encourage the younger playwrights. He gives of himself as they work under his guidance.

As one sees him to-day living in the midst of his great workshop, which is a veritable museum, one realises that so long as this master lives there is a tribunal of undisputed authority and knowledge before which all questions of dramatic value may be referred.

Belasco's imagination is luminous and receptive, but his

emotions and sympathies are after all his best weapons. They are vibrant and inspiring, so that whenever he raises the curtain upon a new production, the playwright, the artists, the staff, the crew, all have insensibly become his creations into whose achievements he has breathed the very breath of life.

In England I recall Olga Nethersole, that artist who might have reached any height in her profession had she submitted to discipline. I remember so well her performance in Clyde Fitch's "Sappho," which, under the ban of Anthony Comstock's protest, landed both author and star in court. Yet even in those days a voluminous mink coat and veiled lady had its effect upon the dispensers of justice, thus assuring the verdict of acquittal in her favour.

One of the best anecdotes about Nethersole is one which I myself unwittingly inspired.

She was to begin an engagement at His Majesty's Theatre with Sir John Hare. I wanted a few minutes' talk with Tree's very genial manager, Henry Dana, so not realising that it was a first night, I went to the stage door. Dana was expecting me, but our business was forgotten in his eagerness to tell me of the emergency which threatened the success of the opening, for there in the hall stood Olga Nethersole's trunks, still unpacked. It was quickly explained that she had absolutely refused to have them touched unless they were removed into Tree's own suite, to which she insisted she was entitled by virtue of her professional position. Lady Tree's rooms, which had just been re-decorated, had been assigned to her, but they were not acceptable to this star of such magnitude.

"What are we to do?" cried Dana. "She will not listen to reason, and absolutely refuses to dress."

"Let me see what I can suggest," I replied.

I began to think very hard. At last a solution struck me, and forthwith I sought out my gifted young friend.

I knew that she always dreaded disease of any kind.

Germes and microbes eternally cast their shadows upon her mind. Contagion was always anticipated. Precautions were invariably taken.

Entering the room where she was temporarily installed, I found her still in street dress, with tears of indignation coursing down her cheeks. She burst into a tirade about the indignity which the management was striving to inflict upon her.

I closed the door and, lowering my voice, I whispered that for a long time I had known that Tree was the victim of incipient tuberculosis, that he coughed incessantly, that his rooms were filled with unsanitary draperies and upholstered furniture, that under such conditions there must be myriads of microbes lurking to do their deadly work, whereas Lady Tree's apartment was hygienic and wholesome.

As I talked my listener became more and more subdued, until finally she clasped her hands saying: "Poor Tree! How little one would suspect this awful menace which threatens him!"

It seems superfluous to add that the trunks were speedily ordered out of the hall, and that the performance took place.

When I ran across Tree on the following day, looking hale and hearty, I told him the story, begging him now and again when he met Nethersole to get up a good old grave-yard cough in my protection.

Then the Grossmiths. How well I recall George Senior, who could sit for an evening at the piano delighting his audience with his talent and originality! I remember his proud reference to little Weedon, whose mere appearance produced a chuckle, and to his boy George, whom he thought was really most promising, and who made the third of this Grossmith trio.

In "New Lamps for Old," by Jerome, I first saw brilliant Gertrude Kingston, who would be a very rich woman to-day had she not believed in Little Theatres, in advanced thought, and in the complex drama just twenty-five years too soon.

In the world of literature and the stage, one of my earliest and best friends was Elizabeth Robins, who introduced Ibsen to England and who helped secure the franchise for women in Great Britain.

She always cherished her ideals, and consistently lived up to them.

I recall many an agreeable hour in her society, but the most happy memory circles around her little English cottage with casement windows opening upon the garden, where a beautiful robin red-breast flew in and out at his pleasure, helping himself with greediness to the sweet country butter upon the table.

After all, it was the soul of St. Francis which had tamed the birds, so who knows but that it was the crystalline soul of my wonderful friend which had allured the robin?

In my own country the army of gifted writers was always adding to its ranks, and some who have reached great fame I can remember in their beginnings.

Gertrude Atherton at that time was a breezy expression of Western vigour, and a contrast to Amélie Rives, who was Southern and languorous. At sixteen the latter tore passion to pieces. In her maturity she wrote with the heart of a child.

Mrs. Atherton began as an iconoclast, and made her début as a progressive. She came to New York from the Pacific Slope, which in the Eastern minds was chiefly associated with gold, a great fire and yellow men.

Much of the present nearness of East and West is due to Gertrude Atherton, for no one is more responsible than is she for dragging us out of our provincialism, and for making us realise the inadequacy and ignorance of our local unit.

Even if Gertrude Atherton had never written that splendid and inspiring book, "The Conqueror," we in this effete East would owe her our everlasting gratitude for having planted the State of California upon our mental map.

And Richard Harding Davis, that prolific and brilliant author of short stories, which made him quickly famous. As

a journalist he invariably interviewed himself in such a dramatic fashion that it produced most excellent copy. While provoking a perennial criticism owing to his international vagaries, Davis liked to think himself the Rough Rider of literature, so that many picture him writing with a sombrero hat upon his head and a serapi around his shoulders ; yet he was never able to wholly divorce himself from the influence of Independence Hall and of the Liberty Bell. When a young reporter he was frequently an enigma to his associates.

The world of journalism, though somewhat out of my province, has always been a close study with me, and one of especial interest. I have known personally the luminaries of this profession both here and abroad. My memory goes back to de Blowitz, that arbiter in foreign politics during many years. He wielded a great power, and was a familiar figure in every capital of Europe. Then Mrs. Crawford, associated so long with the *London Truth*. And Labouchere, who towered above his *confrères* while inspiring them to a more modern spirit of zeal. And delightful T. P. O'Connor, who is a better Irishman than he is a journalist.

Years ago I remember Ballard Smith, who was the "stunt" editor of the *World*. He once paid me the compliment from an editor's standpoint by saying that I had a "nose for news."

Then wonderful old Henry Watterson ! How nobly would he have opposed Prohibition if he had only lived long enough to break a lance in order to pierce its fallacies !

I frankly confess that I used to thrill at the genius of S. S. McClure, who was always as full of ideas as an egg is full of meat. He believed so in himself, and was by nature and habit such a compelling optimist. He struck sparks from any anvil, no matter how unwieldy and cumbersome it might be.

And finally that pioneer from Maine, with forty dollars in his pocket and with forty millions in his brains, Frank Munsey, who was "dear old Frank" to his intimates, even when he had youth as his palpable asset. It was he who saw the value

in the popular magazine and in the prolific press. Little by little he built up a chain of papers to dispense information, as well as the Mohican Grocery Stores to dispense food. He has enough imagination, however, to prevent him from entering into any wild-cat schemes. He thinks carefully and acts discreetly. He is never rash. Munsey possesses mental integrity to an unusual degree. He is courageous and tenacious of purpose, and whether one agrees with his viewpoint or not is after all immaterial, for he remains a great journalist and honest withal—qualities which do not always go together.

I have invariably felt a leaning toward those men who can take a dead proposition and proceed to vivify it. They are the constructive forces in the world. Unfortunately when the average reader is told that some periodical has passed a circulation of over two millions, he rarely realises the human dynamo which stands back of this accomplishment.

Trained by that great American, Cyrus H. K. Curtis, the name of Edward W. Bok is indissolubly associated with the *Ladies' Home Journal*, as will that of George H. Lorimer be handed down to posterity as the power of the *Saturday Evening Post*, for it is he who practically brought this periodical to its present prestige, for while educating his vast clientèle he makes the process so attractive that the ingredients are not only easily digested, but millions each week are crying eagerly for more of the same health-food.

Instead of indulging in a destructive criticism of the press of this country, of its monthly magazines, of its weekly periodicals, and of its daily newspapers, we should be intelligent enough to separate the dross from the gold, and to realise that back of all the fustian is a great force which is a power for weal or for woe in our country.

Americans are readers. They have a thirst for knowledge. They are limited in time. They crave information in tabloid form.

CHAPTER XLI

ONE of the most extraordinary conceits of which the human mind is capable is found in the so-called atheist, who boasts of the freedom of his viewpoint and of his aloofness from every form of religious belief. He proclaims his liberation and advertises his courage.

He insists that he has thrown over superstition and that he has freed himself from tradition.

He stands in a vain glory upon his own feet, his intellect is his only guide and his disassociation from creed his only mentor.

But what these people decline to recognise is that whereas it takes many generations to make a gentleman, it likewise takes many to unmake a Christian. They forget that the Ten Commandments were part of their mother's milk; that the Apostles' Creed had been recited without question by hundreds of their ancestors; that Christopher Columbus and the Pilgrim Fathers had prayed as they first stood upon American rocks, that the Covered Wagon of 1848 sheltered not only pioneers, but chaplains and priests; and that unconsciously they have never been able to divest themselves of a sense of reverence and of a respect for law and order which percolates through their turbid veins despite the fact that they have become theoretically independent of the faith they reject.

I have always maintained that to throw weight overboard is much easier than to land weight upon the deck.

Any fool can strike a fish, but not every fool can land one.

There is no intolerance in the world so great as the intolerance of tolerance, and no bigotry so excessive as the

bigotry of the image-breaker. To praise the devil is second nature. To praise God is an education.

I have always viewed professional reformers with a rooted mistrust. Possibly there is no greater social plague than these worthy people, who insist upon forcing the world to submit meekly to their experimental upheavals.

Social reform is rapidly developing into a fine art. It has created a new industry, hence a new channel of employment. It provides more salaried positions for mediocre minds than can be found in any other walk of life.

Go through offices occupied by so-called investigators interview the heads of the organisations engaged upon social statistics and who are preaching peurilities, read the magazines supported in the interests of welfare movements, and you will be struck with the minimum of intelligence and of originality displayed in the manipulating of such enterprises.

I once knew a worthy gentleman whose business it was to keep recreating for himself four thousand dollars a year positions in investigating.

Before he had exhausted every angle of the research then in hand he had formulated some fresh scheme for a similar effort in another direction, and had found further rich patrons ready to finance him and the prospective work, so that off he would jog-trot again with an assured income for some five or more years ahead.

Whole families can thus be floated into easy berths if a little ingenuity is exercised at the offset. Brothers, sisters, indigent relations all swell the overhead charges while enjoying a sufficient competency upon which to live.

I remember when a certain conspicuous public benefactor first discovered prostitution. Promptly a vice commission was selected, and from office-boy to printer employment was given to hundreds who would otherwise have remained idle.

Had the effort begun and ended at this no real harm might have been done, but when a report was issued and promiscuously sold, setting forth the findings of this group, public

morals were seriously threatened owing to the indiscriminate perusal of a pamphlet replete with salaciousness and reeking with details that would have caused any normally decent person to blush. Brothels furnished the data and prostitutes were given the stage.

This was soon followed by the publication of a novel sponsored by the same influence, which was so abhorrent in its filth that even the patient public became alive with indignation.

The most objectionable film I ever saw was promoted in the name of reform, and the most revolting play was produced under the auspices of a medical and sociological review.

The vicarious enjoyment of vice is a proverbial condition of the degenerate, and thousands of men and women whose lives have been rigorously correct, take a sensual enjoyment in poring over details which excite their pruriency and stimulate their natural depravity.

A story is told of an octogenarian penitent who insisted upon confessing a certain indiscretion which had been committed in her extreme youth. When it was pointed out by her spiritual guide that this had already been amply atoned for, the old lady, wagging her head, said : " But I do so love to talk about it ! "

Many of those engaged in the uplifting of the derelict find a strange pleasure in dwelling upon facts which had better be ignored except in hospitals.

I live opposite a prison chiefly occupied by the down and outs.

In the spring and summer it looks like an attractive watering-place. Baseball and other sports provide agreeable recreation for the occupants.

Excellent bands furnish concerts. Kind citizens donate movies and vaudeville. The air is good, the outlook salubrious, the food plain but excellent. Altogether the life there is infinitely preferable to the park bench, especially in cold weather.

Yet we are told by the sentimental reformer that in the mere curtailment of personal liberty is found the real punishment, and that a fair amount of comfort and of relaxation is demanded in the name of humanity for these miscreants and loafers.

As I constitutionally dislike seeing anyone unhappy and miserable, I am personally delighted to look across our sunlit river and to realise that my neighbours are enjoying in a certain degree the same pleasures and creature comforts as myself.

Probably if left to me the whole world would be given freedom, and the road-menders of life would be the happy-go-lucky tramps who often make really delightful companions.

CHAPTER XLII

LITTLE by little I drifted into personal management which afforded me many an amusing experience.

When I first knew Cissie Loftus she was literally the baby bride of Justin Huntley McCarthy. She wore the proverbial simple white frock and the sash of blue ribbon. She was redolent of youth, simplicity and charm.

In those days Elsie Janis had not established her subsequent proprietary control of imitations. Others had progressed unmolested along similar lines. Cissie Loftus was one of the pioneers in this form of entertainment. She possessed a thread of voice which could rarely be heard beyond the first few rows.

Her efforts at this time had been confined to New York City, when suddenly I had the bright idea of giving cultured Boston an opportunity to see my protégé. After reviewing the situation I decided that it was safer to take her over for one performance only, but in order to gather in any kind of harvest we should need a very big auditorium. I promptly communicated with my friend Charles Ellis, and rented the Boston Music Hall, which had a phenomenally large seating capacity. It was a huge and cheerless place, which seemed to swallow any average audience.

This notable occasion in question was advertised like a circus. Not a bill-board in Boston was barren of posters announcing the event. Every window in Tremont Street proclaimed the coming of my twinkling star. Prices were increased. Everything, even special suburban trains, were provided.

I had sent over a husky young fellow as my representative. I told him that the very moment the audience was seated, and before the appearance of Miss Loftus, that he was to take every cent in the box-office, liquidate our local obligations and fly for the train. My instructions were closely followed, so that at the end of the first part of the programme, when the indignant public surged into the lobby demanding a return of their money, insisting that they hadn't heard one bar of music or one line of dialogue, the box-office was closed down and the treasurer was nowhere to be found.

After all, we had given Bostonians the opportunity of seeing a very lovely little person and of enjoying a bit of most excellent pantomime.

Miss Loftus, who received three-quarters of the profits, was always most appreciative of this friendly effort made in her behalf. After all, she was a nice girl and needed the money.

My next adventure was with the Castles. I had sensed the approach of the dancing madness. I saw the fat years ahead!

The Castles were in Chicago when they agreed to appear under my management. My desire to direct them came about in a most accidental way.

I happened to be lunching in the Ritz when, looking across the street, I noticed that the large double house which had been at one time reconstructed for a fashionable dressmakers stood idle.

The thought of making it into a smart dancing-centre flashed upon my mind, and simultaneously the personalities of Vernon and Irene Castle, whom I had already seen in Paris, as an attraction in a restaurant.

I visualised the trade-mark, "Castle House," provided I could persuade this couple to leave Chicago, where they were earning about four hundred dollars a week, which, in contrast to their first wretched stipend overseas, seemed to them munificent. While with me during the first season their worst earnings averaged two thousand per week, hence they never

regretted their decision to accept the proposition which I had wired.

It took me a very little while to rearrange the building so that we could open it with daily teas, at which the Castles always danced.

I selected able assistants and instructors, for the morning hours were given over to classes which Mrs. Hubbell directed.

I arranged with Jim Europe, the great conductor of jazz, so that I had him furnish the music.

The construction of the house was absolutely impractical for the purpose in hand, yet it was the best expedient to be found.

Time was essential, as the craze might die out. The cream had to be quickly skimmed from the pail. We opened with a list of the most prominent women as patronesses. Mrs. John Corbin presided at the tea-table.

The success of the undertaking was pronounced from the very outset. The place was jammed and the floor-space inadequate.

I conducted the publicity myself. We had columns continually in the daily press without its ever costing a dollar.

I had something to advertise, so did not have to pay for the advertising.

The Castles were news items in themselves. Her photographs were lovely, and there were so many of them taken that there was never any difficulty in finding fresh space for their appearance.

Irene Castle's charm was extraordinary. Her body was lithe and graceful, her swanlike neck suggested the highest distinction, her features and colouring were beautiful.

Her limbs, ankles and feet were perfect. No imitator of Irene Castle—and there were many—came within her class. She was unique in gifts, and stood alone in attraction.

Vernon Castle, however, had the talent as a dancer. His wife was always his perfect partner, but it was he who set

the pace, it was he who inspired the rhythm, it was he who invented the steps.

Together they made a wonderful team, and although there have been hundreds of couples who, following after them, have achieved a certain fame and notoriety in ball-room exhibition dancing, the Castles were never equalled, let alone excelled; neither have they ever been replaced.

The vogue of Castle House lasted two seasons. I obtained private engagements for them everywhere at fabulous prices. I can recall two bookings in Washington, afternoon and evening, for which they received twenty-five hundred dollars.

Once during some litigation, when evidence was given as to the value of their services at that time, the lawyer who cross-examined me tried to embarrass me as a witness by asking whether he had understood me to say that they had danced in Boston and in New York on the same afternoon, to which I replied that while I was willing to admit that Vernon Castle's legs were unusually long, still they were hardly long enough to stretch from city to city.

Castle House was soon succeeded by Castles in the Air, a roof-garden over the Forty-fourth Street Theatre, which for a while was popular and successful. This in turn was followed by Castles on the Sea at Long Beach.

The trade-mark was established. It was easy to continually push the button.

The special dancing did not interfere with the Castles appearing under Charles Dillingham's management in musical comedies. Unfortunately, when called upon to get over a song the effect was rather painful; nevertheless, they furnished a picturesque background for a trivial plot, and Vernon Castle, being a natural comedian, was always in addition to the cast.

Irene's gowns were the reflection of her own unerring taste, and never upon any stage at any time was there such a vision of loveliness as when she appeared in "Watch Your Step" dressed after the fashion of Lady Hamilton as Perdita.

As she came down to the footlights she was such a

symphony of form and colour that the audience fairly gasped in admiration. I have never seen a greater triumph born of a personality which was externally faultless.

Our last success together was a flying tour through the large cities under the management of Arthur Hopkins. The plan was simple. The advance work was ably conducted.

For weeks before the expected appearance, a silver prize cup had been placed in the best display window in the city.

Terms of the contest were widely advertised. The Castles, with their fine orchestra, would then arrive. The exhibition of their prowess would be followed by the local dancing contest. Vernon Castle was the judge, and it was he who bestowed the Castle Cup to the winner.

In four weeks the total gross receipts were about eighty thousand dollars.

The final round-up took place in Madison Square Garden, to which all of the fortunate cup-winners were invited to struggle for the championship.

They all came. Distance did not figure as an obstacle. The Garden was packed to the roof. The heat was suffocating, yet the contestants danced on and on until finally the Castle Cup was won.

Thus ended the great era of dancing !

The next and last time I saw Vernon Castle was in France as a commissioned officer in the British Flying Corps.

His war record was admirable. His courage unflinching. Had he lived he would doubtless have won the Victoria Cross, for already he had brought down many an enemy plane under the most dangerous conditions.

It seemed a grim finale that both Vernon Castle and Jim Europe, who had so often been associated with light and laughter, should have so speedily followed each other in death, the one a gallant gentleman who lost his life in the service of his country, the other a brave negro who was the victim of an ugly jealousy, which at the end effaced a war record of which his friends and admirers had been so justly proud.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE Castles' menagerie did not come under my direction, although to collect animals was with them a passion. Nothing that stood on four feet escaped their interest and attention.

They committed a folly by purchasing an expensive country place on Long Island which, so far as I could ever ascertain, served chiefly as the winter quarters of their circus. I remember when Vernon Castle had gone into the breeding of police-dogs they had at one time twenty-eight canines to be cared for and fed. The amount of milk required for the puppies was always a surprise to Irene and a cause of discussion with her farmer.

On another occasion, sitting in my office, a stocky-looking individual was ushered in.

When I asked the object of his visit he thrust a very crumpled and none too clean slip into my hand. I examined it and found it was an order to pay him fifteen hundred dollars for a horse purchased by Irene as she had passed through Boston a few weeks before.

There was no excuse for doubting the validity of her signature, but as she had only been in Boston between two trains, I was naturally wondering how she had discovered the horse.

But the Castles, no matter how serious were their engagements, always managed to find time to buy. They were constitutional spenders. Their day was never complete unless they had bought something. Motor-cars were purchased with a joyous carelessness I have never seen equalled. Fur

wraps fell upon Irene's lovely shoulders like manna from heaven.

Yet their enjoyment in this prodigality was so genuine that one often wondered whether Hogarth had not somewhat exaggerated the sinister side of the "Rake's Progress."

Another diversion in which my young friends excelled was to stage themselves in conflict. They liked to test out their guns, only as a rule the latter were merely pistolettes.

They made me think of a little boy who was comfortably fed and clothed, but who, longing for some variety in his existence, used to practise shivering at home in order to stand in the street on a cold day to beg from the passer-by.

I was always convinced that the bickerings of the Castles were ephemeral and unreal as was this lad's shivering. But while they were absorbing the attention of the onlookers, they furnished ample opportunity for sympathetic comment and regret that their domestic life was not serene.

In reality these recurrent scenes invariably ended in sunshine, and in renewed turtle-doving. After all, the Castles never grew up until the tragedy of war eclipsed the light which had flooded their lives through those few brief years. My association with them is one of the pleasantest reflections floating across my crystal ball.

I have often been asked as regards their vogue in Paris.

Their first appearance there was at Olympia, where they had been promised the sum of one hundred francs for one week's trial.

They were then living in a small mansard room. No heat, no electricity ; nothing but their supreme confidence in their future.

This try-out proved a dismal failure, but Vernon begged for a second week, assuring the management that they had something up their sleeve in the shape of a scene in which he was a tin soldier and she a columbine, the final moment of the set showing Irene disappearing up the chimney while Vernon fell in a heap of dismay.

This was a glorious success. Above all it served to attract the proprietor of the Café de Paris, who offered them an additional fifty francs per week if they would dance there after supper.

Following their number great was their surprise to see a very smart young man get up, throw a hundred-franc note on a plate, and then pass it himself around the tables. The collection amounted to over five hundred francs, which was gracefully presented to the lovely Irene. The youth who had followed his generous impulse was the Grand Duke Dimitri of Russia !

Another venture into management which reveals my occasional lapses into gullibility introduced on the scene a young and good-looking Semitic with an ingratiating manner who came to me one day to suggest a get-rich-quick scheme which seemed a marvellous opportunity.

It was theoretically so simple, and merely involved the leasing of one of the great piers at Atlantic City for Easter week, opening with a programme of artists which would surely pack it.

This youthful impressario proposed that we should each put up fifteen hundred dollars. It was my name which was affixed to the contracts for artists, for equipment, for billing and all the rest—thus I made myself responsible financially.

Amongst others who were to appear under our management was Fritz Kreisler. He was certain to draw double the amount fixed as his guarantee.

Everything moved along briskly. My profits in imagination were already in the bank, when lo! on the Saturday before the great week I awoke in New York to realise that we were in the grip of the very worst blizzard of the winter. Snow, wind and sleet combined actively during the day to tie up all traffic to Atlantic City. Every "special" between Philadelphia and this popular resort was cancelled. Twelve hundred chairs destined to seat the large audience were either smashed or dashed into the sea. Our elaborate announcements were washed from the walls. Wreck and disaster were

flashed over the wires. When the sun came out late on Easter Sunday its rays warmed merely a few straggling visitors who wandered in isolation upon the deserted boardwalk.

Not only did I have to face the heavy losses, which even the subsequently pleasant week-days reduced in only a small degree, but my enterprising young manager failed ever to put up his share of the cash. Yet now as I write he is a well-known figure on Broadway, one of our promising producers, and one who is doubtless collecting money for other enterprises, using the same tactics as he did with me. His promises to pay would fill a volume. However, my experience was valuable, and I have never since bought an Easter hat until after Easter !

Many amusing incidents have happened in my office, for I was always blessed with a sense of humour.

I remember one story which is especially worth telling. I was sitting at my desk when it was announced that a man who had called for the third time was very anxious to see me. The visitor said that his name would mean nothing, but that his business was of considerable importance.

I inquired about his appearance, age, etc., and my secretary replied that she thought he was a "near gentleman"—a description, by the way, which fitted him like the brand-new gloves he wore.

He came in with a very furtive and confidential manner, and said : "Madame, I have long since desired to meet you. I have followed your career with sincere admiration." I nodded gratefully. "I see that I have been correctly informed and that madame is a little plump." (I weighed over two hundred pounds.) Again I acquiesced.

"Perhaps you would like to remove some of the superfluous fatty deposit ?"

"Most certainly," I answered. "Can you suggest anything ?"

"Ah, that is why I am here. I have just come from abroad with a wonderful remedy which I procured after

months of effort. I have this for sale. There is no danger whatever, madame, in trying it. It must be applied externally."

I inquired as to the price, and my visitor informed me that the treatment cost usually five hundred dollars, but that I would prove such a splendid advertisement of its curative power that he would make a special price to me of three hundred.

He went on to state that this so-called liquid must be well rubbed into such portions of the body as were unusually obese, "Although," he said, looking at me intently, "in madame's case the lotion would have to be very generously applied over a considerable surface."

Again I nodded my head in acceptance of this tragic fact. "I presume," said I, "that you will give my maid instructions as to the method of the application."

Then, approaching me, he lowered his voice and said: "Ah, madame, I would not entrust the treatment in your case to anyone. I should have to apply this reducing fluid myself. I am ready to begin at any time suited to your convenience."

I jumped from my seat, threw open the door, and exclaimed: "You miserable peddler! You insolent impostor! How dare you propose that I should pay you three hundred dollars for the privilege you have the effrontery to mention!"

I was so convincing in my attitude of outraged propriety that the poor creature fled down the hall, his coat-tails flying and his bottles knocking together in his pockets.

I was in the habit of poring over every advertisement, and rejoiced in enclosing stray dollars for clocks which were made of tin, for bird whistles which became mute in my possession, for blocks of wood which would kill potato bugs provided you put the insects between them, for roses which never grew, for spring bulbs which never bloomed and for a hundred other articles which, while moderate in price, were still more moderate in merit.

To read advertisements and to fill in coupons to be mailed has always been a passion with me. It is a harmless and fairly inexpensive amusement which may doubtless have put heart into many a despondent Mr. Wallingford who was waiting for replies from just such easy marks as myself.

And think of the good laughs I have enjoyed at my own expense !

These alone have been well worth the money, for a laugh is of priceless value, beating all other rejuvenating processes.



ANNE MORGAN

CHAPTER XLIV

AN experiment into which I, Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolfe and Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt plunged with no little enthusiasm was to establish and operate under our personal supervision a respectable dance-hall, where we introduced a cafeteria, then a novelty in the East, and where we anticipated prohibition, as only soft drinks were purchasable on the premises. It was this last ruling which proved our financial undoing, for despite the fact that in the beginning people crowded in hundreds to be served corned beef-hash and apple-pie by volunteers of distinction, despite the fact that we had a splendid jazz band, a fine floor, moderate prices and attractive diversions, it was not long before the crowds became familiar with our conditions, and before we were deserted for similar resorts where real beer was served instead of lemonade.

Broadway and booze had formed an alliance which nothing could break, and which nothing, in my opinion, ever will break.

We finally sold out. The place was taken over by a professional cabaret manager; the lid came off, the doors were flung wide open and the money we had lost was swiftly recovered and increased by our successor.

When I next side-tracked in business it was as the producer of musical comedies, which venture met with considerable disapproval on the part of my friends, while certain managers hailed it with delight.

The fact was that the building of theatres had outstripped the building of attractions.

Thus I became associated with F. Ray Comstock and with Lee Shubert in that form of entertainment which has been so successfully imitated ever since—namely, a comedy with music in which each extra girl became an individual, dressed according to her personality, and was not given a uniform costume. We had only twelve young women, who were especially selected for charm and distinction. Many girls made their *début* with me, and how often do I see a name heading a programme only to recognise it as one of those whom I discovered, and to whom I gave a first chance.

I prided myself on selecting gowns for my girls of such modish refinement as would allow them if necessary to walk from the stage into any drawing-room. My decorations were also selected with an infinite attention to taste and to detail.

In fact, musical comedy lost its commonplace atmosphere, and through the joint efforts of my associates and myself it was raised from the ranks into the realm of a different and better form of entertainment.

Another thing of which I am justly proud is that Jerome D. Kern's first score, "Nobody Home," was our opening production. This was followed by "Very Good, Eddie," and "Love of Mike," which in turn established a series of successes for which Kern was musically responsible.

We had put a certain deserted theatre upon the map; we had introduced a novelty and had popularised a composer. We had brought Guy Bolton, P. G. Wodehouse and Philip Bartholomae together in our librettos. We had proved that a small, intimate, clean musical comedy, devoid of all vulgarity and coarseness, could be made financially successful.

After a few seasons, satisfied with my experiment, I quit, and thereafter refrained from making any further productions.

There were several reasons at the time which determined my choice of the material with which I was identified.

Plays were then being so well done that I did not feel that I could improve upon them, whereas there were many new ideas to be infused into the lighter form of amusement.

I felt an impulse to contribute these ideas. Another influence to which I yielded was that I thought I might possibly do something toward improving the status of the chorus-girl. I had good reason to believe that very little consideration was given them, so I determined to become their friend as well as their manager.

I did not wait for the Equity Association to see that they were paid fair salaries, that they were compensated for rehearsals, and that they were treated as human beings. With me they were never called "chorus-girls," but "small-part" members of our cast. I inspired each and every one with pride in her work, no matter how meagre her opportunity.

These young, impressionable girls are most of them chameleons. They are too often reflections of the atmosphere around them. Let this be one of refinement, and they will quickly respond to it. Their hearts are young as well as their faces. They should be given the freedom of choice as to what their lives are to be. They have more claim upon the chivalry of men than those of higher social position, who are perforce better sheltered and protected. Their work is hard. They should find joy and happiness and understanding in it. They are not of a coarse fibre; on the contrary, they are incipient artists, with all the sensitiveness which that implies. They are "just girls" if you will but believe me that the majority of them are, first and foremost, human beings with arms outstretched to the sunlight and with souls looking heavenward for that something better which we all want to find.

The men employed by us in the direction soon had to accept the fact that I would stand no bullying, no coercion, no swearing and no blackmailing. No girl would be held up so as to assure her advancement in the company. No personal equation would be introduced to terrorise her.

The chief regret I felt in ceasing to produce was that I thus resigned my opportunity of helping those in the profession who might benefit through my understanding of their needs. I had an infinitely larger field for studying the human

equation when a total of fifty or sixty were being employed than I could ever have had with the average number making up a dramatic cast.

It was all a most interesting and educational experience. To produce a play after a musical comedy is an easy task. The one is involved, the other is simple. The detail necessitated through the combination of costumes, scenery, orchestra, book and lyrics; the staging of the numbers, the inventing of the dances, the experiments with the lighting—in fact, the many angles, each one of which must be carefully worked out before there can be any semblance of unity, is complex beyond belief.

Rehearsals are many and exhausting. Prior to the opening it is not unusual to call them day and night, and it is no uncommon thing to have them last from seven in the evening until eight on the following morning.

In this connection let me say that another thing I insisted upon was that hot bouillion, coffee and sandwiches should be provided for the members of the staff, company and stage hands, when these long hours engendered all this physical strain and fatigue. I was dealing with human beings and not with machines. Each and every man and woman we employed were entities and equals. If this spirit had always prevailed in our theatres there would never have been any need of the Equity or Fidelity Associations, and much of the present friction would never have existed.

A great deal of misapprehension has been formulated regarding the immorality of the stage. This popular conception is exaggerated and absurd, for the average of respectability and decency in the ranks of the profession is high, and I do not hesitate to state would compare more than favourably with the lack of ethics condoned by modern society.

There is much less licence within the theatre than within the drawing-room, and the manners and deportment of the average show-girl would often put to shame the conduct of the débutante.

But where reform is sadly needed in our theatres is in their actual construction and in their inadequacy as regards air, hygiene and creature comforts. The dressing-rooms are frequently a disgrace. Little or no attention is given to physical needs. One room with a certain pretence to luxury is set aside for the star, while the rest of the company is treated with practically no consideration whatever. In my opinion, dressing-rooms without outside windows should not be allowed by law, elevators should be provided to avoid the eternal and fatiguing climbing of stairs. Showers and well-ventilated toilets should be insisted upon. A proper rest-room attractively furnished should be accessible to the company.

In fact, while I have never had any ambition to build a theatre for the sake of art, I have been sorely tempted to do so in the name of health, and I firmly believe that a building of this kind constructed under the personal supervision of sanitary authority would be a godsend to the community. We have had enough theatres financed by the impersonal millionaires. We have had enough movements started in the name of art. What we do want is a man of vision and of knowledge who will build a theatre in the cause of humanity; who will direct it with a due recognition of the ethical and physical requirements of the men and women who are to work within its walls; who will regard those he employs as members of one great family, and who will take into consideration the fact that the artists who perform on the stage carry their sensitiveness with them off the stage, that the gifts which they lavish so generously before the public spring from the identical elements of character and of temperament which should therefore be nurtured and not crucified.

Less gilding in the decoration, fewer marble columns supporting the proscenium; excessive luxury in the auditorium might all be profitably exchanged for a wider and more intelligent recognition of the just requirements of those who are prodigally pouring out their best on the other side of the footlights.

CHAPTER XLV

BUSINESS began to weigh heavily upon my shoulders. I had through success encouraged many competitors. Agents sprang up like mushrooms. Many who were seeking clients went about literally with their offices in their hats; nevertheless there were a few who were serious rivals. I was single-handed to all intent; thus when it was proposed to me that I should join forces with a few others in establishing a general agency, I was very glad to accept the suggestion. After many weeks of meetings with lawyers, and after many debates as to the best way in which we could operate, the American Play Company became established as an active organisation to which I turned over my then existing business.

That I was to have my desk in the new headquarters at 33, West 42nd Street, was understood. My name was retained as vice-president of the company, but when I went abroad in the early spring of 1914, I went with a sense of freedom, and facing the first real holiday I had known in many years.

Little did I anticipate how long my detachment from active business was to be.

Little did I realise that we were on the verge of a catastrophe such as the world had never seen.

Little did I think that months and even years would elapse before I should again do "desk work."

That I was in the mood of shifting my responsibilities after the long period of persistent effort was only natural.

The conditions in the theatrical business were changing day by day. The older managers were being driven to the

wall by those younger who had come upon the scene. Everything was growing. Men who until then had enjoyed a monopoly of power were struggling to maintain their prestige.

No one more disturbed the old order of things than did three brothers who drifted to New York City from up-State. They were mere striplings, dark-haired, dark-eyed and determined. These lads, whom I knew from the outset, were Lee, Sam and Jake Shubert.

Their first enterprise of importance was the leasing of the Herald Square Theatre. I knew that they would go far, for each in his own way possessed qualities which pointed to success. Lee Shubert, like Charles Frohman, had his early education been different, had he had any substantial background or any helpful direction, might have drifted into Wall Street, there to become a power.

The larger profits are made through the theatres themselves, and not though the attractions which occupy them.

The gross receipts are shared, but not always equally. The percentages to be divided vary. The theatre takes few chances and as a rule plays safe. Frequently its share is first deducted to insure the rental. The producing manager must wait for his money. Where the value of the attraction is in doubt it is not unusual for the owner or lessee of the theatre to protect himself by insisting that a large deposit shall be made in advance before the opening.

To-day the profits in the theatrical business are being materially reduced as the cost of operation has so perceptibly increased.

Organised labour is more exacting in its demands. The musical union grows more drastic in its methods. Taxes are heavier. Heat and light have become very serious items.

So far as the producers are concerned, similar conditions prevail. Salaries are augmenting. Scenery, furniture and properties can no longer be suggestive of economy. They must be correct and lavish. The public insists upon the very best. Each manager vies with the other to excel. Interiors

must demonstrate taste and knowledge. Costumes must set the fashion. It is not unusual to have dresses of even the extra ladies cost many hundred dollars each.

It is therefore no wonder, in the face of all this, that the prices for seats have so increased. The public demands more, therefore it must pay more. Personally, I can see no solution. It is a vicious circle which can only be broken by mutual consent.

While the authors' and agents' scale of royalties and commissions remain the same since pre-war times, still, it must in justice be admitted that as the gross receipts are larger than formerly, the authors and their representatives have thereby been benefited.

This whole control of theatres, while influencing the general standard, does not happily exclude individual managers and producers. It would be disastrous to art were such the case.

There is always room for the man who has enough money with which to introduce ideas, and probably nowhere in the world is the theatre as rich in promise and as ripe in fulfilment as to-day in the United States.

Such men as Winthrop Ames, Sam Harris, George Tyler, those heading the Theatre Guild, Arthur Hopkins, Edgar Selwyn, Gilbert Miller, not to speak of their many able associates, would deserve high recognition in any country. Young talent in our theatre is developing rapidly, while we can still feel proud of such older artists as Margaret Anglin, who stands pre-eminent in her profession, of Minnie Maddern Fiske, that peerless comedienne, of Julia Arthur with a voice of liquid gold, and of Leslie Carter, whose recent return to the stage was a dramatic triumph.

A rare galaxy of stars, indeed; yet these are only a few who are entitled to our admiration and endorsement.

And now a last word to those pessimists who always look to Europe for their inspiration while eternally chanting a solemn requiem over the products of their native land.

Let them study our own theatre with an open mind. Let

them keep for a while this foreign miasma from their brain. Let them realise that a nation must create its own expression ; that it must produce what is indigenous to its soil, that while it may be a faithful student, it must not become a servile imitator, that its dramatic art should be the spontaneous reflection of its people, its customs and its tastes.

Let them remember that the exotic in our midst is like a dish of caviar, and should never be substituted for the health-giving foodstuffs which grow in our own fields of grain.

CHAPTER XLVI

IN the early summer of 1913 we gave a fête at the Villa Trianon, which was long remembered for its beauty and originality.

The cultivated taste and imagination of Elsie de Wolfe, added to the sympathetic enthusiasm of Anne Morgan, made a most effective combination, and one which produced a result which was most charming. There were covers set for forty at small tables upon the lawn.

Rows of tiny lights marked the flower-beds. Garlands of electric bulbs dripped from the trees.

Festoons of roses hung from the roof covering the terrace. The fountains played, illuminated by the variety of coloured lights.

The paths from the villa to the Pavilion of Music led past sweetly odorous shrubs.

Concealed were wind instruments which at intervals gave the signals so familiar to huntsmen, the notes resonant at first, then slowly dying until lost in the whisper of the wind.

At the foot of the rose-garden was the best orchestra to be engaged in Paris. Fortunately the night was perfect. The stars were shining, the silver moon peeping through the branches, and the air soft and caressing. No conditions could have been more perfect for an entertainment of the kind. The guests who dined were all distinguished, the choice, one might say, of the diplomatic corps and of the real aristocracy of that Europe so soon to be dismembered. Looking back I can see not only our own Ambassador, genial and gentle Myron T. Herrick, but the official representatives of Great Britain,

Greece, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Turkey and Russia. The lions and the lambs were to eat together !

Two or three monarchs in the making, one of whom was subsequently assassinated, lent an emphasis to the atmosphere of the occasion.

After the dinner there was a carefully selected programme of music composed of the chansons of the eighteenth century. These were interpreted by gifted members of the Grand Opera.

About forty more guests had been invited to the concert. Owners of neighbouring châteaux and American friends who had come over for the season.

As my crystal ball reflects the passing figures of this brilliant group, I see creeping across the corner a dark shadow which slowly but surely was to almost efface this memory of wit, gaiety and laughter, for even then there was a strange and sinister vibration in the air which made conversation pause, and which forced optimism to hesitate.

None dared to formulate the dread that was in the mind while the cymbals of a false mirth clashed the louder, while dancing became an orgy, while extravagance was rampant, and while debauchery and sensuous indulgence were the order of the day and night.

The whole world was mad !

The Magic City was crammed to the doors while the churches were deserted and empty. A great lady would pay five francs to find as her partner her friend's footman, who had to hurry home to serve a dinner at which she herself was to be present.

Radical leaders were being received by the Comtesse de Noailles to the exasperation of her father-in-law, who refused to sit at table with them.

The Comtesse Greffuhle, that eternally beautiful and distinguished leader in Parisian society, was giving receptions which served as a meeting-ground for those whose hands held the fate of Europe. Statesmen, politicians, historians gathered in her salon to discuss the possibilities and to determine the

potentialities. It was kaleidoscopic and thrilling. Unconsciously one was swept along, afraid to think and dreading to prophesy.

In every serious soul the tocsin of fear was ringing ; in every mind the shadow of terror was lengthening.

The mills of the gods were grinding slowly but surely, until that day when humanity was to be crushed between the stones. In June, 1914, came the first rumble, followed by the universal query, " What will happen ? " Yet the work of the world moved on in superficial normalcy.

Toward the end of July Anne Morgan and I went to do our annual cure in Brides-les-Bains, a little village in Savoie, a few miles from the border of Italy and a short distance from the Col du Petit Saint Bernard, which leads to Aosta.

We had motored down as usual, and as we neared our destination, in the neighbourhood of Albertville and Moutiers, we had met tramping along the roads contingents from the Alpine regiments.

We naturally imagined that they were training for the autumn manœuvres, the only thing that seemed to us unusual was the fact that they carried equipment which as a rule signified the exigencies of war.

We had been in Brides but a few days when the news from Paris became very disturbing. We followed the march of international diplomacy which was making every effort to avert the catastrophe. Our confidence in the skill of Sir Edward Grey was boundless. Most of us believed that he would triumph. We, like many others, thought that war was impossible.

Miss de Wolfe, who had been in Baden, was coming through Chambéry *en route* to Spain, where she intended passing the time while we made our cure.

We motored over to dine with her, and even then, on the first of August, dismissed the possibility of any very serious cataclysm. As we wished her a pleasant journey how little did we imagine that before we all met again we would

have passed through days of anxiety and of frightening preliminaries !

On the fourth of August we were sitting in the courtyard before the little hotel, sipping our coffee, when suddenly we heard a clatter in the street above, and distinguished the voice of the crier, who was rushing from village to village announcing : " War is declared ! War is declared ! "

For several seconds our hearts seemed to have stopped beating. The silence was like that of nature before a great storm. We dared not break it even by comment.

Then the bells of the village church began to toll. This was the cry to arms which the inhabitants had not heard since 1870. The older folk remembered it. The past became their present. Grimly they climbed back to their huts hanging upon the mountainside. None were so ignorant as not to ask themselves the question which was to decide their local problem : " Would Italy be an ally of Germany and Austria ? "

As the peasants looked eastward the Italian snow-peaks seemed hideously near and the mountain passes ominously direct.

My first preoccupation was the thought of my friend, Miss de Wolfe. How far had she gone on her way ? With her was her maid and her two Pekingese dogs. The chauffeur was French. His military papers were in his pocket.

As I had mapped out her route I knew the name of every hotel where she would most likely stop, so I began sending telegrams of inquiry, but all to no purpose. The lines were so overcrowded that practically no private messages were transmitted. They were accepted without responsibility on the part of the operators.

Finally, after days of apprehension, an answer came from the patron of the hotel at Perpignan, who wired that a lady, maid and two dogs had left to cross into Spain, and that all seemed well with her.

This message was most reassuring, and was ultimately confirmed by Miss de Wolfe in a letter written from Barcelona.

It seemed that her chauffeur said that if she were willing to start at dawn and allow him to drive rapidly, that he would take the car across the frontier, where she could find some Spaniard who would conduct her to her destination. He could then board the express back into France and be in time to report for duty. This plan worked out admirably, so that Miss de Wolfe experienced no discomfiture until we met once more in Biarritz facing together the inexorable fact.

In little Brides events were shaping. The mobilisation went on day by day; the troops were moving as fast as possible. All passenger trains were stopped. For three weeks we were marooned. We were literally without money, for our funds had been exhausted, and we were unable to get even a few hundred francs from the Paris bank. A sad predicament for a daughter of the house of Morgan!

The supplies in the hotel ran low. No more meat, no more bread. A few vegetables, salads and potatoes became our staple diet.

Nothing mattered, however, but the one absorption. Every official communiqué was posted at the entrance of the bath establishment. What was announced one day was denied the next. These first bulletins were most carefully edited by the government. The people then, as in 1870, must be told only as much or as little of the truth as was deemed politically advisable.

The opening act of the drama brought the company together, without any comprehension of the lines they were to speak, of the plot which they were to unfold, or of the incidents in which they were to be involved. The theatre of human marionettes had flung open its doors. The band played the Marseillaise. The word "glory" was blazoned in electric lights while the peasants were driven like sheep in the shambles, while the womenfolk wept as they saw their mules requisitioned, while the sobbing babies clasped their mothers' knees, while the dread of the future hung over them like a pall. *Pour la Patrie* was a phrase, whereas suffering was an actuality.

Here and there was found the spirit which stood behind the poilus, the spirit of self-sacrifice and of supreme courage which has ever been the inheritance of France.

I can vividly recall one scene. We were sitting in the Mairie when suddenly a middle-aged woman, her hair streaked with grey, her eyes aflame with purpose, entered the room. In her hand she clasped a rough-hewn walking-staff. On her feet were sabots. No covering upon her head. Her dress was of coarse homespun, with a black knitted shawl pinned around her shoulders.

"Monsieur le Maire," she cried, "I want you to send someone to my barn, there to arrest my son, who is hiding and who refuses to do his duty. I can do nothing with him, monsieur. You must drag him out. God has cursed me with a boy who is a coward, and he is my only child! My husband has been dead some ten years."

While moved by the tragic appeal of her story, the mayor's duty was only too clear. We were curious to follow this to the end, so forming a procession of two gendarmes, of ourselves and of a few neighbours, we walked silently behind the woman for a distance of a mile until we reached the shed she indicated.

The men went in and ordered the boy to appear. At the sound of voices, he began to utter cries of terror. He was hiding under the straw. At last he was dragged out, his face contorted with fear; he clung to his mother's skirts, he begged her to save him, he urged her to remember that she was casting him forth to certain death. Not a muscle moved in her face. She was deaf to his appeal. There she stood, upright and rigid, her single utterance addressed to the officers being: "Sirs, do your duty!"

As they turned to go down the mountain, the boy made one more gibbering appeal: "Mama, mama, don't you know that I shall die!"

Her only answer was: "I would rather you died fighting for France than to have you live to be a coward!"

There she stood, the concentrated spirit of all that was

best in her race, yet as the little procession moved out of sight, she threw up her arms, unconsciously making a cross with her body, then swaying for a moment, this poor, tortured woman fell forward in a swoon, her courage conquered by a mother's broken heart.

CHAPTER XLVII

At last money reached us. We paid our bills, and procured our papers which permitted us to circulate. The chauffeur who had brought us to Brides had left at the first warning of mobilisation, but with no inconsiderable cunning he had carefully removed three or four parts of the motor, leaving these with me for safe keeping in case the authorities should take it into their heads to requisition our car. This turned out to have been a wise precaution, for this very thing happened. I laugh now when I remember the disgusted look of the inspector when he left the car in the garage, muttering that it was useless spending time or money on a worthless machine. We remembered a chauffeur in Paris who was once in our employ. He was too old for the army classes which were being called.

After telegraphing, followed by a long delay, our rescuer, Henri, arrived. It had taken him exactly five days to come from Paris to Brides—a journey of ordinarily twelve hours.

At last we started, a party of seven, as we had assumed the responsibility of several other travellers besides ourselves.

At Grenoble we found regiments on the march, and there for the first time discovered the use to which boy-scouts were to be put, for they were already being trained to serve as messengers under military orders.

It took some while to become accustomed to the constant barrier of armed sentries who recurrently asked to see our official permits, for in those early days of the war everyone was a "suspect" until proved otherwise.

We had a Peugeot car, the body bearing the name of

Bider, a well-known Parisian carriage-builder, although in the provinces this mark was unknown. It had a German twang which was nearly our undoing, for passing through a certain small town, the population became excited, and upon examining the automobile and finding this name, insisted that we were German spies, despite our passports and assurances to the contrary. We were finally released and allowed to go on our way because Henri had fought with honour in 1870, and was able to show incontestable proof of this fact.

The emergency of buying tyres was coped with rather intelligently. All tyres had been requisitioned along our route. The army had gathered them up wholesale. Not a retailer had been allowed to keep any in reserve.

I suddenly remembered that the Continental factory operating in France, but controlled by German capital, had been confiscated and closed, yet there was reason to believe that this firm's stock of tyres, which had been so widespread, could not be so speedily exhausted. Of course the government would not use them, therefore the dealers must still have them on their hands.

My reasoning proved correct, for not only were we henceforth able to buy all the tyres we needed, but they were sold to us at a reduced price.

Gasoline was a more difficult proposition, as our only chance of securing it was in some shop off the main route which had been overlooked by the itinerant inspectors.

Arriving at a certain town, we found that our tank was practically empty. This was a garrison city; everything there was under military orders. Not one drop of petroleum could be purchased, unless the traveller possessed an army card authorising the sale.

The patron of the hotel informed us that our only hope lay in our securing such a card. Where and how to get it was the question. We decided to lunch first and to exercise our wits later.

Suddenly an imposing general appeared in the dining-

room. He was alone and seemed crabbed enough, judging by the curtness of his manner. The head waiter whispered that he was the commanding officer in that sector, and that it was he who issued the orders.

Our hearts sank. He looked stern and forbidding. We watched him begin to eat. His appetite seemed amazingly good.

We comforted ourselves with the thought that by the time he had finished his bottle of Burgundy he might thaw.

Our surmise was logical, for when his coffee was served he was actually smiling.

Taking our courage in both hands, we crossed the room, saluted with respect, and told him of our plight.

He asked why we were not travelling by train, how it was that we had been allowed to keep our automobile, and a dozen similar embarrassing questions. We lied glibly, dwelt upon our ignorance as foreigners, threw ourselves upon his chivalry, with the result that he consented to give us five litres of gasoline.

Five litres! Only a little more than five quarts, and barely enough to take us to the next town. However, we thanked him in terms of profuse appreciation, and under his escort went to the yards of the arsenal, which seemed to us like a vast sea of petroleum barrels.

The order was given to let us have ten litres instead of five, already a hopeful sign.

We chatted merrily with the general, told him some amusing stories, one of which reached its risible climax just as a soldier was feeding our thirsty tank. Judge of our relief when our pompous acquaintance, with a gesture of rash carelessness, exclaimed :

“ Fill up the reservoir. Let these ladies have whatever they require.”

We had triumphed. Once again I was convinced that there are many advantages in being a woman.

Personally, I have never felt that the sex appeal *per se*

required either an apology or a defence. "Male and female created He them," say the scriptures.

No other incident occurred worth mentioning until, at the end of several days, we reached Biarritz, where we found Miss de Wolfe awaiting us; also many French friends who preferred the security of the South of France rather than to remain in Paris, for already the country had become divided into the classes of those who were fearless and of those who were afraid. The men who fought and the men who stayed at home. The valiant and the ambuscaded.

The news from the front was bad. The battle of the Marne terrifying and ominous. The government had removed to Bordeaux.

After a brief rest we ourselves decided to push northward. Miss De Wolfe's car had been left in Spain. Our extra fellow-voyagers had returned by train, so there was room for us all.

At Bordeaux we found a strange order of things. Incessant movement, suppressed excitement. The restaurant of the Chapon Fin was literally a diplomatic bee-hive. Each foreign Ambassador or Minister had his own reserved table, to which his friends were invited to dine. At night all were in ceremonious dress or in full uniform.

I remember the brilliant appearance of the Russian chargé d'affaires, who appeared in white and gold, with jewelled orders pinned across his breast.

In this connection let me say that this same gentleman stated in a loud voice for the benefit of his confrères, that Russia had four million soldiers fully equipped and ready to put into the field, that she had two million more in training, and that within an incredibly short time her allies could count upon still another four million—ten million in all.

In the centre of the dining-room one table was reserved for the members of the Comédie Française, over which Mlle. Cecile Sorel presided.

When we asked her how she and her associates happened to be there with the Government, her reply was classic, for

she answered : " We are of the Government," in which at the time there was considerably more truth than fiction in her assumption.

After leaving Bordeaux we pushed on to Havre, from which port we were to sail in early October. Our cabins had been reserved for some time. There seemed no reason to change our plans, but every reason to return to America, for a while, at least. I remained in Havre, while Miss de Wolfe and Miss Morgan went to Paris.

The news from there was daily more disquieting. German Uhlans had been seen at Pontoise. The Belgian forts had fallen like packs of cards. The English losses in the North had been disastrous. Senlis was in ruins. The silver harnesses of the Crown Prince were being held in Compiègne until such time as they were to be thrown across the backs of the black charges, which were to drag him triumphantly through the gates of Paris.

Panic was in the air. Not once, but a dozen times, the Villa Trianon was threatened with destruction, for it stood within the military zone and could at any time be condemned as an obstruction.

It was due to the personal protection of our Ambassador, Mr. Herrick, and to the American flag which he had ordered hung at our entrance, that the villa is standing to-day intact and inviolate.

Anne Morgan's superb horse, Impérial, a gift from her father, which had won many prizes at Saumur, had been requisitioned at the outset.

This magnificent animal had been purchased for ten thousand francs. Miss Morgan later received, as an indemnity for him from the French Government, less than eight hundred.

I might add that when the moment of international liquidation arrived, this allowance would have seemed princely in the eyes of our commissioners.

It was at Havre that I had my first hospital experience. The wife of the mayor was at the head of the Aides who were

to work with the trained nurses. There were but few of the latter. The Sisters had been expelled nine years before. How to get them back was the embarrassing problem. They could not be asked officially to return. The expedient was suggested and acted upon to have trains always at the frontiers to be held at their disposition. Discreet intermediaries would invite them to profit by this opportunity. They would no longer be molested. They would travel free of cost. Charitable ladies would guide them to those places where they were most needed.

The plan worked out admirably, so that gradually the Sisters crept back into France. Slowly they resumed their vocations, generously they forgot, sublimely they forgave. The new order once again became the old order, for the privilege of healing has been eternal in its practice.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE Casino at Havre, like many similar buildings, had been converted over night into a hospital, for the first wounded were being sent back from the front and there was nothing ready.

I shall not dwell upon this early chaotic condition. Looking back, I realise how extremely primitive and unhygienic were the resources which were then at hand. It is little wonder that 80 per cent. of the first wounded died of gangrene. No modern equipment of any kind. The generals were old, the surgeons were old, the hospitals were old, the nurses were old, the material was old. Age was over everything and in all directions.

Drastic house-cleaning in the rear was essential before there could be any hope of victory at the front. My unskilled hands and head were of as little value as were anyone else's, so I offered my services and began as a novice in the newly-improvised hospital while awaiting the return of my friends.

One incident I recall. Every bed was occupied. The place was full to overflowing, when suddenly at two o'clock we were told by the chief surgeon that three hundred beds would be needed at six, as a new contingent of wounded was *en route*. There were no beds. There was no space in the wards, but the order had to be obeyed.

Wild rushing throughout the city and its suburbs resulted in the requisite number of flat mattresses stuffed and covered with whatever was at hand, but where to put these was the question. The floor was the solution. The only empty space was in the corridors. Not another square foot was

available. More bustle, more hurry, more confusion. Nevertheless when the rattling, out-of-date ambulances drove up to the door to discharge their loads, there were beds ready to receive them.

There was hardly a pound of absorbent cotton to be had, and it was because of this dire unpreparedness that we who were in France at the beginning cabled for help from our own country, with the result that the cargoes of surgical dressings and other necessities began to pour in from America in a steady stream which never ceased for five long years, giving a total, at the final summing-up in 1919, of more than three billions of dollars which had gone over to France from the American people, either in cash or in material ; and this sum quite apart from such wholesale giving as was represented in the subsequent aid for reconstruction.

Finally we turned our faces homeward, and on reaching the United States, plunged into the various forms of relief work which had sprung up in every section of our country.

All were helping. All were giving of their time, money and service. The era of emotion and hysteria had set in.

The newspapers revelled in stories of German atrocities and of French bravery. Little Belgium was the headline. The costly mistakes of the respective War Offices were features. The imagination and sympathies were stimulated until the world became a victim of moral and mental indigestion from which even now it is still suffering.

Each group of workers was fascinated with the idea of inventing and of wearing uniforms, so that by 1917 it seemed as though every woman in the United States, whether she were slated to go overseas or not, found a pretext for appearing in some style of uniform. One of the most trying moments of the majority of the female war-workers came not during the midst of their activities, but when they could no longer find the slightest excuse for strutting about in stiff collars, in masculine ties, in leather belts and in brass buttons.

Peace became infinitely more of a trial than war.

In 1916 I returned to France to work as an associate of an admirable organisation known as the American Fund for French Wounded. No praise can be too excessive for the magnificent work done by the women who promoted and operated this society, and who continued for many months under the leadership of Mrs. Lathrop, Miss Vail, Mrs. Nevin, Miss Scarborough and Miss Morgan.

The zeal, the devotion and the efficiency of those connected with this organisation can never be exaggerated. Even in the hours of her greatest tribulations, France was, fortunately, fed and clothed. Her sufferings were never allowed to endure once the crisis of her need was made apparent.

Many times it has been said that France has never asked for charity—a statement which need not be refuted. Her friends did the asking while she was worshipped for her grace in receiving. Millions became intoxicated over the joy of giving. Appeals were welcomed. Responses to them were chronic. The habit of generosity became prevalent.

Never did I realise the extent of this prodigality until I became an active visitor in the hospitals in and around Paris. This was the particular sector assigned to me. My task consisted in the daily and intelligent distribution of thousands and thousands of necessities and of comforts. It was then that I had my experience of what war really meant. It was then that I came in actual contact with this vast, concentrated area of suffering. It was then that I became accustomed to such sights as in looking back seem almost creations of my fancy. To see men who had literally been shot to pieces and yet who lived was incredible. The awful side of it all was the getting used to it. To die seemed normal.

I am inclined to think that the highest virtue engendered was unselfishness. For a while, at least, any thought of self was submerged. That was probably the very best which came out of it all. Bravery and courage were often extolled when ignorance and indifference were in reality the mainsprings.

Folios of untruths have been written in defence of this

stupendous upheaval, and when now and again actual facts have been expressed, in either the spoken or the written word, they have been most unpopular. No one yet dares to tear away the veil and to view the causes and the influences which brought on and which carried on the war. For nine years the world has voluntarily rested in its own ignorance. No one has had the courage to confess to what extent the great sacrifice has been in vain.

Politicians ruled in 1914, politicians brought on the war, politicians and profiteers continued it, politicians are keeping it up, and until the peoples themselves are willing to face this hokum, and to admit the fraud which has been practised upon them, until they are ready to tell the truth and listen to the truth, just so long will the war be fought, just so long will the pacifists and the militarists line up in a semblance of contention, whereas they are merely pawns in this international game of chess which is being played now as it was in 1914 by a comparatively small group of trading manipulators.

But all this is far away from the sublime conduct of those who were driven or who bravely went into the slaughter-house.

The more often we crossed this toll bridge of human lives, the more we gave of ourselves, the more we responded to the supreme call of further sacrifice.

I remember sitting one day on a bench outside an English hospital in France where I had become rather nauseated at an unusual sight I had witnessed, and there hearing the guns booming at no great distance. At each detonation I thought of the folly of such waste. Within the four walls behind me every effort was being made to save life, whereas there before me all skill was being employed to destroy it. The cost of saving and the cost of killing were striving to keep apace. Bodies were being dehumanised and disfigured beyond recognition, and yet every shot that had been fired, every gun that had been forged, every yard of cloth that had been woven, every ounce of food that had been grown—all represented profit somewhere to somebody. The industry of the

world was the oil which lubricated this greater industry of destruction.

However, none of this was our business at the time. We were engaged upon our individual jobs of helpfulness, incidents concerning which would fill a volume, and books upon the experiences of war have become unpopular reading. We lived at that time at a high pressure of idealism which was fortunate, otherwise we should never have been given the physical and the moral strength needed for the task. We had neither time nor inclination for analysis. We did not think. We just did. We were under orders to God Almighty. Our creed was simple. We lived it rather than recited it.

Of the soldiers who marched gaily toward the guns I vastly admired the British Tommies. They invariably sang and joked, no matter how hard the heartstrings might be pulling within. Their pluck was proverbial and their willingness to help the other fellow was unvarying.

I remember a little incident which occurred in a ward. Looking down the long line of beds, I detected an English boy among the French lads. He seemed glad to hear his own language. I asked him the usual question as to his presumable wounds, to which he replied that he had not been wounded at all, but that he had come in from the wet trenches, where he was crippled with rheumatism. His suffering from neuritis was excruciating. For nine days his whole body had been in agony. I asked what the nurses were doing for him, whether they had applied heat, which was the only relief in such cases. He said that they had done so the first night, but that since that time he guessed they had been too busy.

Feeling that the case was urgent, I said that I would see the head nurse so that something would be done ; whereas the boy, raising himself with difficulty, indicated the long rows of adjacent cots and murmured : " Please, lady, say nothing. Them nurses have so much to look after, and them fellows need them more than I do. I can stand it, ma'am. Don't say nothing. Please ! "

This was the spirit that one met. This was the spirit which glorified and excused the rest. This was the spirit which made it all seem worth while so long as it lasted.

Great experiments in surgery were being tried and recognised as successful. Deaths from blood-poisoning were almost negligible. Fractures were speedily set right. Ambrine had been discovered for the painless healing of burns. Our volunteer American medical staff was leading in science. The names of our surgeons became names to conjure with. Our Neuilly hospital was the model in the art of nursing.

Facial surgery was attracting the attention of all physicians. At Val de Grace, where there were four thousand beds, photographs and data describing this were eagerly studied.

I recall one case which had begun treatment at the above place and which was finally discharged as finished at Meudon.

The fellow's face had been three-quarters shot away. It had all been practically remade. The building of his new face had taken over six months.

Talking to the young man on the morning of his dismissal, I congratulated him upon his splendid appearance. Hardly a scar was visible. His skin was smooth. His colour excellent.

Instead of a gleeful acquiescence, he said : " Madame would not think that the surgeons had done well if madame could study my face and then look carefully at this photograph of it as it was."

I took the photo from his hand, whereat my admiration of the skill of the surgeons only increased tentold.

Disappointed at my lack of sympathy, he urged me to examine more minutely the difference between the old and the new noses, remarking that he was surprised I did not notice that the original had been rather pointed at the end, whereas now he must return to his sweetheart with a square termination of this prominent feature, which possibly she would never recognise as his !

This was an amusing angle and an amusing incident.

CHAPTER XLIX

ONE of the improvised hospitals at which I was a frequent visitor was the old prison of the Fresnes. There were two large buildings on the property, one formerly used as the men's quarters, the other as the women's.

It was in the latter where Madame Humbert, that famous swindler, had been incarcerated, following her spectacular gesture of prodigality, which she had successfully made before the world for so many years.

She kept up a courageous bluff to the very end until the Tribunal issued an order to search the great safe, which she had sworn was full of enough securities to more than satisfy the claims of her creditors. As she was driving along with her lawyer, Maître Labori, and the police, who were to make the examination, she impulsively threw up her hands and exclaimed :

"How thankful I am that this investigation has been ordered, for now you will have the absolute proof of my innocence. You will know that I am a woman of honour, the victim of cruel enemies."

Even the astute lawyer, who told me this tale in later years, confessed that at that moment he was convinced of her innocence.

Arriving at the vault, when the door was forced open the safe was found to be absolutely empty. Not a bond was in sight. Not a certificate of any kind. It was as clean as a whistle, for its former contents had long since been hypothe-cated and used as collateral.

Just as the tourist is shown the cell of Marie Antoinette in

the Conciergerie, so I had pointed out to me the cell formerly occupied by Madame Humbert. Presumably on the theory that both were high lights in history.

The Fresnes hospital was unusually depressing. It was one of a small group from which all female nurses had been debarred. There was one old crank of a surgeon-general who clung to the traditions that women should never be allowed inside military hospitals. As a concession to his prejudice four hospitals had been put under his jurisdiction from which with his flaming sword he had driven out every suggestion of femininity.

The only reason for my being sneaked in was because the place had become so forlorn and so wholly without any semblance of decent comfort that I was admitted in the hope that I might bring some relief to the situation, which I am happy to say I was soon able to do.

There was not a pillow upon any bed. The poor devils suffering from head wounds were obliged to sit upright, because to lie down under the circumstances was painful beyond expression. I secured from our organisation a full supply of pillows which meant immediate ease to the suffering patients.

I recalled the fact that the men's prison stood high above on the hill. I asked my friend, one of the superintendents, whether this also had been converted into a hospital.

Bending his head confidentially, he whispered: "Oh no, that is where we keep the Belgians. There are twelve hundred of them up there."

"The Belgians!" I exclaimed. "What have you to do with them?"

"Why, they are some of the soldiers who refused to kill the Boches. They fired into the ground instead. The Belgian Government pays two francs per day for their support, to which our Government adds the regular two francs. This causes a lot of discontent. You see," he continued, "it is hard to explain to our men why they are only allowed half of this amount for risking their lives while those fellows who have

had a soft job since the beginning of the war are eating up just twice as much."

I quite understood the irritation of the poilus under these circumstances.

Another favourite place where I went frequently was a large building, formerly a Jesuit college, which, like similar ones, had been converted into an emergency hospital.

To this unit were consigned many blacks—the native Senegalese, Somalis, and other tribal negroes from the French colonies.

At first it seemed uncanny to see the rows of white beds occupied by those swarthy figures. Many of the faces had been slashed and were decorated with pigments. The curling hair was often dyed with henna. The general effect was weird. They had a particular dislike to covering of any kind, and it was with the greatest difficulty and only due to the eternal vigilance of the orderlies that they ever retained any semblance of modesty.

One morning the large ward was filled with an intolerable stench. It was impossible to trace its cause. Up and down walked the nurses. Every corner was examined. Every cot was searched. At the head of each bed hung the personal kit of the soldier who occupied it. Suddenly a young doctor detected the fact that it was from one of these kits that the smell proceeded. It was taken out and opened. Found within were ten pairs of German ears which a Senegalese had cut from the heads of his dead victims. They were his most precious treasures. He was wholly oblivious of their decomposed condition. The smell had never penetrated his nostrils.

When he saw his bag being removed he began to mumble incoherently, thus expostulating in his own savage fashion against what he felt was a civilised injustice. He had fought for these ears. He had earned his property. Why should he be robbed of his glory?

I stood by a lad in the early twenties as he died. He

spoke some French. His cot was by the window which overlooked the green meadows. I shall never forget that boy's eyes as he said : " My people at home are peaceful. We do not shed another's blood. We live in our fields. We feed our cattle. We do not know why we had to come here. I am glad to leave the noise. I have had too much suffering. I will be happy again."

I enjoyed considerable popularity with these black patients which could not be explained to the nurses and doctors until one day I myself accounted for it to their satisfaction.

In Africa the women are fat. Slimness is a thing almost unknown. As a rule the white nurses were slight. My savage friends could never associate their appearance with any idea of sex. Whereas I reminded them of their mothers. When they looked at me they were no longer quite so homesick, so that when I entered the wards their faces invariably beamed with pleasure. I seemed to them every pound a woman !

CHAPTER L

THERE were great centres from which the wounded were distributed as they were returned from the various fronts, chief of which was the Gare La Chapelle, in the suburbs of Paris. The system was well-nigh perfect, thanks to the splendidly organised ambulance service run in connection with our American hospital under the direction of A. Piatt Andrew. While the Red Cross, the Herman Harjes Corps and other volunteer units were engaged in similar work, the service under Mr. Andrew stands out in memory as one of particular efficiency and of inspiring accomplishment. In this work Mr. Henry Sleeper of Massachusetts gave invaluable personal aid. His zeal was indefatigable.

But back of this organisation and of the Neuilly hospital there was one influencing spirit. It would, therefore, be a flagrant omission in this connection to omit the name of Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, Snr. ("Anne Vanderbilt," as she is affectionately called), in recognition of all she did overseas.

It was chiefly she who made possible this very ambulance corps, and the high standard of our volunteer nurses was mainly due to the executive ability, to the vision and to the untiring devotion of this very remarkable American woman who through many years never spared her strength day or night. Frequently she was under the fire of the guns, which she bore without a tremor. There was no service so menial which she did not perform, no act of self-abnegation to which she did not respond. Like all very fine characters, she has herself under control. Her sense of fair play is acute. Her abhorrence of flattery is very genuine. Her mind is logical

and reliable. While she responds to affection, she first commands respect. Her wealth has always been to her a trust.

In 1917 she became prominently associated in the direction of the American Red Cross in Paris, thus her service continued well up to the time of the armistice.

It is interesting to note, however, that before the war Mrs. Vanderbilt had taken her nurse's training at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City under the skilled instruction of that dean of her profession, Anna Maxwell. Thus in 1914 Mrs. Vanderbilt was no tyro, but a woman who had studied seriously.

Several times each week the long sanitary trains crawled through the grey dawn into La Chapelle, where they were automatically discharged of their bleeding freight. The stretcher-bearers moved silently up and down the platforms, resting their burdens just long enough for the doctors and superintendents to note the data of each case.

Physicians and nurses were at hand, emergency cots were in readiness, then one by one the various ambulances were filled until they rolled out of the station yard to deliver their loads to such centres as had been designated.

There was never any confusion, never any excitement. The routine of system had become perfected.

In another direction lay the great railroad junction of Le Bourget. A short run in an automobile north-east from Paris, on through the Porte du Pantin, skirting the vast munition factories of St. Denis, on past one of the most important aviation defences of the city, along a rough stretch of road, and we came to the huge gates which served as the entrance to the stretch of interlocked rails which marked this place.

Every train seemed to pass through Le Bourget. One's first impression was of their incessant coming and going, all bearing the same human freight, for this station, with its volunteer canteen as a central pivot, was the common meeting-ground of those who had given and of those who were willing

to give, as there every degree of physical suffering had been poured into the melting-pot of voluntary sacrifice.

Not a man passed by who asked whither he was going, for he had left father, mother, sweetheart, wife, forsaking all, while looking forward, his face illumined with the sublime light of patriotism.

Nothing else really seemed to matter, for here, as the thousands trudged along, one realised that the dread of death, that shadow which pursues us through life, had at that moment been conquered and forgotten. Death no longer awakened any shudder of surprise.

The unselfish women who moved so untiringly hour after hour from group to group, offering such nourishment and refreshment as they could prepare with the meagre means at their command, were rewarded by expressions of gratitude which in their humble way ennobled those who gave them utterance.

Day after day the restless trains rolled on, becoming part and parcel of the perfect organisation of war, while the canteens everywhere were inspired and vitalised through that throbbing equation of the human touch and of the human understanding.

Herein lay the secret of the cohesion which stood back of every soldier and of every servitor through France. All at that time were brothers and sisters, composing one vast family, who were contesting for the same cause, side by side, facing together the hour of final victory which they believed would surely come to them.

These men and women fought and laboured with conviction in the righteousness of their purpose, but in this they did not stand alone, for everywhere, on every frontier, whether friends or foes, all believed that they were struggling in the name of civilisation to establish and to maintain the peace of the world.

At this station of Le Bourget one saw in imagination a holier field of the cloth of gold which covered the tracks and which concealed the dirt-heaps. These embroidered lilies of

fancy were the ideals which studded those five hundred miles of the fighting front.

It was after all a glorious vision, so that in turning my crystal ball the memory of those last years of the war throws into relief the poignant beauty and fateful inspiration of these crucial tests of sacrifice.

All were keyed up beyond normal moral height. None was occupied with analysis. It was not until months later that the account-books of the world were submitted for reason's examination.

The final curtain had to fall before the phrases were divorced from figures, before cause had to justify effect, and before the spiritual had to demand an accounting from the material.

The soldiers and the citizens were happily in profound ignorance of the profiteering which was going on about them.

An instance of this was told me by a French general who commanded one of the most vital northern areas.

He had determined that in equity the price of potatoes should be established at twenty-three francs a thousand kilos. Hardly had this been announced when certain gentlemen occupying official positions in the civil government rushed madly to his headquarters insisting that unless he advanced this price to forty francs they and their associates would be ruined, as they had cornered the potato crop through the centre and south of France for twenty-four francs per thousand.

The general was obdurate, and the high cost of living was controlled.

Hundreds of similar stories were heard in all directions. Rings in peoples' noses are not always confined to savage tribes.

Elsie de Wolfe at this time, 1916, had begun her training under Dr. Barthe de Sanfort in the administration of ambrine, his discovery for the alleviation and cure of burns.

Her hands seemed peculiarly adapted to administer this remedy. To dress wounds of this nature was ordinarily a painful process, requiring a very great delicacy of touch.

Miss de Wolfe plunged into the work heart and soul, and upon her return to America the following winter, thanks to her own eloquence and to the generosity of her friends, procured twenty cars which subsequently she organised into active service for the transportation of the burned soldiers.

In 1917 this unit was established in Compiègne. This little hospital, however, was evacuated during the enemy's advance. It was frequently under fire, as the patients were removed from one place of security to another.

Miss de Wolfe was always the last to leave each time. She was devoid of physical fear, and it was in recognition of her services in this connection that she received the Croix de Guerre and subsequently the cross of the Legion of Honour.

Early in 1916 we had established in the small house which we had purchased, and which was adjoining the Villa Trianon, a home for the convalescents. The hospitals were growing more and more crowded, the beds had to be vacated long before their occupants were in a condition to be removed. Medical care was still essential, strengthening diet was necessary to recovery, wounds had still to be dressed.

We found that we could place twenty-six beds in our house and in Mrs. Paul Morton's, which stood on the other side, therefore Miss de Wolfe, Miss Morgan, Mrs. Morton, and myself became responsible for this Maison de Convalescence. We secured some seven Sisters who, with the Reverend Superior, were installed in charge. Of course, our gift had to be accepted and directed by the Government, but as we never asked for the official allotment of two francs per capita daily for the occupants, there was no difficulty in overcoming the red tape.

Hundreds of men became our responsibility through many months. The officers were lodged in our house, the men in Mrs. Morton's, while the good Sisters had an annex at the end of a long gallery which formerly had been used as servants' quarters. The old atelier at the foot of our very beautiful garden was converted into a chapel. One of the priests of a

neighbouring parish was appointed by the Bishop of Versailles to administer its needs. I took a personal pride and pleasure in looking after it. There was never any coercion practised so far as religion was concerned. The soldiers were absolutely free to go within the chapel's walls or not.

I recall one man who was a militant atheist, although he had been baptised a Catholic.

When he was first consigned to our hospital he made a great scene at the entrance because he saw the flitting figure of one of the Sisters. He insisted that he would not be nursed by any of the breed. The Superior, a woman of great charm and tact, begged him at least to remain to supper and until she could persuade the authorities to send for him.

After supper he was so exhausted that he grudgingly consented to accept her hospitality for the night.

The next morning the coffee smelled very appetising. Everything tasted good because our financial independence allowed our disbursements to be generous after the American fashion.

Soon our rebellious young friend became a familiar figure in the enjoyment of the garden. At the expiration of three months his health was completely restored.

Judge of our surprise when he became a daily attendant at Mass, and of the good Sisters' happiness when they found him kneeling one morning to receive Holy Communion.

We all returned to New York in the late autumn of 1916, waiting and wondering how soon it would be before our country would become an active factor in the world's holocaust.

CHAPTER LI

It was about this time when it was discovered that I could make a speech, for while I had always been more or less articulate even in my schooldays, the ability to speak before audiences and to arrest their attention was yet in embryo.

Of course, to succeed in holding any crowd one must be sincere, simple, and devoid of self-consciousness, all of which traits were naturally developed during the abnormal period of intense feeling, of burning convictions and of determined purpose engendered by the war.

Probably there was never a time when so many incipient Demosthenes sprang into being. Everybody talked. We talked in groups and by the clock. Squads known as the five-minute men were in evidence on all occasions when appeals were in order, and there was hardly a day when the crowds were not invited to give. There were certain stock phrases which were heard at every street corner, such as "Give until it hurts."

Every expedient in the way of diversion and of ingenuity was used to arouse the multitude to a sense of generous duty.

The conservatism of President Wilson, who was re-elected because he "kept us out of war," was resented because thousands, especially in the East, were insisting that he should plunge us into war. Yet subsequent events have demonstrated clearly that our President had his ear so close to the ground that he sensed the fact that had he declared war one month earlier than he did, he would have had little unity of support, while risking every certainty of resistance. Our people had to have months of educational happenings before they were in the least ready for conscription.

I happened to be in California when the *Lusitania* was sunk, and the indifference to this event was to me a revelation as to how little were the belligerent sentiments of the eastern sections of America shared in the middle west and along the Pacific Slope.

The general comment I heard expressed was that the people who sailed in this ill-fated vessel were fools for having risked their lives after the official warning given them through the representatives of the German Government. A family from San Diego which had gone down with the ship was be-moaned merely as neighbours, not at all as victims who were to be avenged.

This general apathy seemed to some of us as extraordinary, yet it was thoroughly realised by the President and every member of his Cabinet.

Even a hundred miles back of our own coast-line much of this same sentiment prevailed. It was time enough, it was said, for us to bestir ourselves when we were actually attacked through invasion. We would then show the world that we were able to protect and defend ourselves. This was the psychology which had to be reckoned with ; nevertheless, one which our friends abroad found well-nigh impossible to understand.

At last the moment came when, owing to the incessant submarine attacks which occurred along our very shores, when, owing to the convincing proofs that plots and counter-plots were threatening the peace and the property of the United States, there seemed to be no alternative except to "declare ourselves in."

Thus in the frenzy of an enthusiasm which swept our country from ocean to ocean with a rapidity which can never be exaggerated, the work of preparedness was begun. Money was spent like water. Young men rushed to enlist. Training-camps sprang up like mushrooms. Welfare organisations enrolled thousands of eager volunteers. Everything was at fever-heat. President Wilson was the world's hero.

On May 26th, 1917, both Elsie de Wolfe and Anne Morgan



ELISABETH MARBURY IN HER KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
UNIFORM

determined that their field of usefulness was in France, the former to become a nurse in the unit of the Ambrine Hospital established by the Baron and Baroness Henri de Rothschild, and the latter to inaugurate the society for the reconstruction of such portions of France as had been so ruthlessly destroyed by the enemy. It might be pertinent to note that this work of the American Committee for Devastated France, which began about this time, has been continued ever since by Anne Morgan, Mrs. A. M. Dike, and such of her associates who equalled her in staying power.

That its overwhelming success has been chiefly due to her persistent zeal and to her undivided devotion is a fact of international knowledge. The best advocate which the cause of France ever enlisted has been Anne Morgan.

I felt that my service would be more useful in our own country, so here I remained during all the months when we were active forces in the solution of the great problem which was then wrecking civilisation.

Our first contingent sailed in May. From that time on our troops were transported as rapidly as possible. Our whole country seemed given over to munition plants and to industries identified with war. As each ship bore away thousands of men, their places here were taken by aliens or by those disqualified to fight at wages which became fantastic.

Unskilled labour could fill out its own ticket so far as remuneration was concerned.

Girls rushed from domestic service into factories. Hysteria was universal. Everybody joined something. Canteens studded the terminals and cities. The men in uniform were fed and entertained. Each was a hero in the making. They were all endowed with imaginary virtues and crowned with spotless reputations.

Sweaters were knitted by the gross. Aviation helmets were made and forced upon the heads of boys who were never to know the appearance of a flying-machine. The "Chow" dealt out as rations in the camps was of the best. Uncle

Sam's bill of fare was varied and prodigal. Nothing seemed too good for those wearing the blue and the khaki.

For the overseas service set in motion by the various welfare organisations there was no dearth of volunteers. To many this was a blissful escape from household drudgery and from irksome duty. It was a picturesque and adventuresome solution of monotony. Many of the men who went as secretaries were insured salaries far beyond their average earning capacity. Many of the women rejoiced in the freedom from family obligations which, until then, had been an unknown condition in their lives.

While I am not unmindful of the thousands who proved themselves splendid in their work once they were on their jobs, nevertheless the yearning for liberty and for adventure played no small part in the easy enlistment of hundreds whose one idea was to get away.

How many husbands and wives were saved from the divorce courts through the wearing of the uniform will never be computed! How many, while bidding each other a tearful farewell, inwardly rejoiced at their new-born freedom! How many young women who were disconsolately contemplating spinsterhood revelled in the thought that a heart might be caught in some hospital rebound! How many a lad who was counting the days until some criminal delinquency would be unearthed rushed into the army or navy as he realised that his uniform would cover the multitude of his sins!

It was all a mad whirl in which emotions became so cross-wired as to render analysis impossible.

We were not only engaged in training our men to fight, but we encompassed them with a *barège* of moral instruction such as they had never dreamed of before.

Camp-life was to be a mixture of the fireside, the meeting-house, the public library, the movie theatre, the concert-room, the dance-hall, the first-class restaurant, the luxurious hotel and mother's doughnuts. In the minds of many, imagination sketched the vista of an endless joy-ride. It was a great

adventure, intoxicating and alluring, so that to thousands who sailed away the actuality they were facing seemed too veiled to be feared.

Yet back of this zeal, much of which was unquestionably misplaced, the real work of costly preparation went on. That our army and navy were the best equipped of any of the fighting forces is now generally conceded. Our Government was prodigal of expenditure because we as a nation believed that to save men was more important than to save money.

It has become the habit to criticise the waste of the millions which were poured out by our Administration during this period, yet I venture to state that could our tax-payers realise the phenomenal extent of our accomplishments in the conduct of the war, if they could be made to appreciate some of the facts and figures connected with the part we played in the conflict, grumbling would give place to approval, and criticism to expressions of pride.

In 1917 Mayor Hylan appointed a committee of women, headed by Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, and known as the Mayor's Women's Committee of National Defence. I was one of those selected to serve in this group. Our activities were many and our duties endless.

Not only were we helping the men who were going overseas, but we were organising relief work for the mothers and children who were left behind. In 1918, when the influenza threatened to become an epidemic, the work of our committee as official associates of our Health Department was conspicuous. An Emergency Sub-Committee composed of representatives from every civic and welfare organisation in our city was invited to co-operate with our great Commissioner of Health, Dr. Royal S. Copeland. All of their resources were subject to his command, thus with such a leader and with such material the dread disease was kept under control, and while thousands were dying daily, the city was spared from a scourge which might have taken as its toll a greater number of victims than were dying upon the battlefields of France.

I was also an active member of the National Catholic Diocesan War Council, as well as of several other groups—notably the League of Catholic Women—all of which were rendering effective service.

There was nothing peculiarly laudable in my personal contribution to the cause, for we were all literally in the same boat, never sparing ourselves, never questioning the needs, never criticising the methods. No matter what the demand, we were always there to respond.

Under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus a hut was opened on Broadway, where we gave good “eats” and first-class vaudeville. The boys surged in and out of the little building, which seemed elastic in its capacity. Everything was as free there, according to the K. of C. slogan, as it was overseas. A few of us were formed into a women’s auxiliary committee to take charge of this particular building, and whereas several K. of C. secretaries were always in attendance, we women soon grew to represent to the men the cheerful and entertaining element upon which they counted for their pleasure and delight.

Our popularity was very great, so that in after years when we would accidentally run across any of them in the streets, shops or public conveyances, they would remind us of the old days when we were all good fellows together, and when we were either judges or participants in that most American of institutions known as “pie contests.”

To watch a doughboy or a gob speeding through a squashy lemon-pie was some sight.

One of my enjoyments was inviting seven or eight men to crowd into my touring-car for a spin on a Sunday afternoon. I always took the vote as to our destination, hoping that now and again it might be one of our large museums; but the chance of a good time invariably discounted any educational desire, so that Sunday after Sunday the drive was either to the Bronx Park or to Coney Island, the average being decidedly in favour of Surf Avenue by the Sea.

The reputation of Coney Island seemed to have penetrated every corner of our country.

To many nothing was as great in Greater New York as this city of stucco, of frankfurters, of candies in curl papers, of soft drinks, of popcorn, of side-shows, of crowds and of carelessness.

It stood as the spirit of inexpensive relaxation and of democratic enjoyment. It was the embodiment of the five-cent fare for the five-cent mind, and who of us at times hasn't rejoiced in the discovery that our minds were of this small denomination !

Every real human has cheap moments and common hours.

Every man likes now and again to kick off his shoes and to sit in his shirt-sleeves.

Every woman adores to remove her stays and to hang up her false hair.

Every child loves to have dirty hands and to paddle in the gutter.

The primitive, in fact, is always with us, deny this as we may.

The amount of oratory which the recurrent demands seemed to necessitate was beyond belief.

Both in the City Hall Park and before the Public Library people seemed always to be asking for something. Every liberty bond was a drain upon the throat.

Patriotism was the star excuse which justified expedients and which condoned offences.

It was ignoble to drag the money out of the mobs in the way we experts did. We grew to counting our victims as the Indians did their scalps.

We tomahawked the bystanders and we corralled the loiterers.

I remember once taking part in an afternoon session when a famous professor waxed eloquent before the crowd depicting the beauty and the inspiration of Mount Vernon.

When he finished there was dead silence. The speech had fallen with a thud.

The chairman of the occasion turned to me in disgust, exclaiming : " What in the world is the matter ? Is there no love of country to be found ? Why is there no response ? "

Looking at the heterogeneous mass in the street, I replied : " Why, the only kind of Mount Vernon in which those fellows are interested is Mount Vernon Rye Whisky ! "

I can recall another incident. I was speaking for the Salvation Army drive.

Everything was slow. I turned to the pianist, who was beating out dreary hymns on a very ramshackly instrument, and urged him to jazz up a bit. He shook his head and said the Salvation Army didn't allow any jazz.

Fortunately the splendid Police Band was below the platform, and as they were all good friends of mine, I nodded to them to liven up affairs.

A big traffic officer began some steps in which he invited me to share.

Turning to the crowd, I said : " Who will give a thousand dollars to see me dance with the policeman ? "

A voice from the street called my bluff. I kept my word, puffed through a turn, was kodaked for the Press, and was handed the thousand, which I gave to the Salvation Army lassies.

Once, on the steps of the Sub-Treasury which faces Wall Street, the Appian Way of high finance, my friend, Big Bill Edwards, then Collector of the Port, and myself did such heavyweight team-work that we separated ten millions in ten minutes from the pockets of the bankers.

I have often wondered whether these gentlemen ever harboured resentment against us for beguiling them into the purchase of Government securities which later slid down the toboggan of decreasing values.

CHAPTER LII

WE had many internal differences to combat during the nineteen months when we were actively at war.

In the beginning instructors were sent over from our Allies, who were to give our men training in various facilities before they sailed.

A certain meeting was held in New York to hear a debate upon the attitude of the Sinn Fein. To everyone's surprise, a young French officer, rising to his feet, declared himself not only to be in sympathy with this body, but an actual member of the organisation, which he had joined a few years before in Ireland.

Amazed at his statement, some who were present had his status investigated, only to discover that in order to direct its members in the skill of throwing hand-grenades, he was attached to an Irish regiment then in training on Long Island. His sentiments were speedily reported to his Government, with the result that his visit to this country ended abruptly.

Volumes could be written about suspected spies, wireless apparatus on the top of private houses, waiters conscripted for the German army, and many other Munchausen tales which were the expressions of a widespread hysteria.

However, early in November, 1918, the last act of this war-drama was played, and in a riot of revelry the armistice was declared ; for despite the issues for which we had fought, despite the ultimate outcome of the part we had taken in the conflict, at least the uncertainty was over, the pressure was relieved, the hour of rejoicing was a fact.

Two millions of our men had been sent overseas, four

millions more were in training, while we knew that we could draft further millions if necessary to keep the business of war going for years to come.

We had the natural resources that were practically inexhaustible ; we could furnish ample human fodder for the remorseless cannon. We were perfecting our material ; we were organising on the largest scale ever heretofore conceived. We were slowly but surely getting into our stride.

In fact, we had barely started when suddenly we learned that the vast enterprises which we had undertaken were to be abruptly suspended and rendered inoperative. In other words, the Allied firm, so far as we were concerned, was to all intent and purpose dissolved. We were just beginning to give the world evidence of the fine work of which we were capable when we were informed through the yelling of the newsboys, through the clanging of the bells, through the whistles of the factories and through the shouts of the multitudes that our services would be no longer required.

The inter-Allied partnership was at an end. We were discharged by the senior members of the firm. Our men were to be sent home as fast as ships could be found to carry them.

From that time on patriotism was to be succeeded by business.

Soon we were told that our meddling President was responsible for the cessation of hostilities, that it was he who had prevented the parade through the streets of Berlin, whereas the real influences which cried "halt !" were the French socialists, who had grown sick, tired and resentful of the whole situation. It was doubtless only a question of days before the French Government would have had to bend before the Commune. The history of 1871 was about to be repeated, for war enthusiasm was decidedly on the wane.

The nations engaged in the struggle were literally longing for rest. Every Allied general knew that the hardest fighting still lay ahead, that the greatest defences of Germany were between their armies and the frontier, that thousands and

thousands more lives must be sacrificed, that weeks and weeks of more suffering must be endured, and that the final victory, if they continued, would be the bitterest and most costly of all.

As Marshal Foch afterwards acknowledged: "None of us asked to go on, as we knew too well the price that this would entail."

Thus someone had to be found to whom the buck could be passed. The obvious man to victimise was President Wilson. That he would be proclaimed as the one who had insisted upon peace was of slight consequence. He was lifted into the saddle of negotiations by every European Power that stood behind him. It was, therefore, he who was made apparently responsible for the disappointment that Paris and not Berlin should witness the triumph of victory.

It was under these circumstances that the era of our unpopularity began. The list of our crimes grew. Through reiterated pledges of sentiment our debt to Lafayette was increased rather than decreased. So that when our facetious doughboys dared placard their barracks with the doggerel:

"We've paid our debt to Lafayette,
What the h—— do we owe yet?"

they little realised that the amount of this debt was never to be known, for if ever the sum total were fixed we ourselves might do some calculating. To keep this a floating and an uncertain obligation defers indefinitely the moment of liquidation. Nevertheless, it would be a very salutary thing if once we might ascertain how much, after all, we do owe to Lafayette.

Whether our American cemeteries in France, our unpaid loans both in capital and interest, our free gifts which have passed the millions, have in any degree dented this obligation which, from the end of the eighteenth century, has hung as a canopy of coercion over our heads, remains a question still unsolved.

From our earliest days we have been reminded of this

debt, and during hundreds of years the fact of its existence has been prodigiously proclaimed.

To be given the opportunity of settling this account once and for all seems a hopeless dream. We are still told that we owe it. We are still assured that it remains unpaid, yet it is on record that when Lafayette returned later as a visitor to this country, that Congress voted him a gift of two hundred thousand dollars, together with a most valuable tract of land.

In reality, it is not the Monroe Doctrine which influences our international policy, but it is this reincarcerated debt to Lafayette which stands mockingly before us, defying any rational attempt to determine the validity of the claim or the extent of the obligation.

Centuries may come and centuries may go, yet it becomes more and more evident that the one thing which will be our inheritance throughout the ages will be our debt to Lafayette, who was a restless, rolling stone, an agitator, a rebel of his day and generation, who, in a spirit of youthful adventure, crossed the sea to make the fraternal gesture of sympathy for a struggling colony and for a straggling army. Little did he realise at that time, when he was the guest of our nation, that he was to become its historical creditor for all eternity.

CHAPTER [LIII]

AFTER twenty months of separation my friend Elsie de Wolfe returned to America. Anne Morgan had taken one hurried trip over during the interval.

There was no longer any work for the former in the hospitals, and her business here sorely needed her personal touch.

Like many others, the resumption of the daily harness came hard upon her at first.

I rejoiced at her return, for the interruption of such a companionship as ours had been a wrench. Such an experience can never be classed as painless dentistry, for no anæsthetic prevents the hurt.

Our friendship had stretched over too long a span of years not to have created habits as well as tastes. We had suffered together. We had been happy together. We had shared our disappointments. We had revelled in our respective success. We had mutually known poverty, and side by side had practised self-denial. We had earned, through years of hard work, the luxury which in later years we were to share.

We had faced disintegrating forces over which we had triumphed. Our friendship had survived extraneous influences which at moments could have proved its undoing. We might easily have become victims of misrepresentation and of envy, had our anchorage been less secure.

Whereas, despite all environment and every condition, through fair weather and foul, our craft of mutual faith and mutual affection glided steadily forward, and the friendship between us, which was founded upon the rock of sympathy, of love and, above all, of respect, has withstood the strain of

nearly forty years, combining in one the relations of companion and of sister.

I think that I can truthfully state that the great secret of our happiness has lain in the fact that neither of us ever attempted to dominate the individuality of the other. We have never imposed our personal views nor our personal convictions.

It has always been a case of live and let live. We have respected each other's choice of friends. We have never assumed the privilege of intruding upon each other's privacy. Our habits have remained our own. Our amusements have not been necessarily shared. We have permitted a mutual enjoyment of prejudice.

In all that is external we are as remote from each other as are the poles. Yet the water flows on, the tide rises and falls, the waves tower and recede, the undertow sweeps along the driftwood and tosses it upon the beach, while nothing alters the eternal strength of the ocean, which is so much greater than the ripple of the river.

Emerson's definition of a friend is "that being before whom one can think aloud."

Was there ever a more sublime interpretation? It means the denuding of one's very soul before that other soul which can understand.

It is not the record of one's sins and of one's virtues, but of all that stands back of them. It is the chronicle of what life has meant or can mean to my friend and to me. It is a priceless treasure, a gift from God in very fact. It is the song without words which in the singing becomes the ladder of souls stretching from earth to heaven.

CHAPTER LIV

IN June, 1919, I sailed for Europe in a dual capacity.

Secretary Franklin K. Lane selected me to go abroad in the interests of the Department of the Interior, there to present his farm scheme to the soldiers who were slowly returning and to show them that they could take up land either in small or large acreage which would enable them to build homes and to earn livings. The plan as then worked out by Secretary Lane was practical and convincing. During the three months I was working at the proposition I succeeded in turning into the Department some fifteen thousand applications. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Lane was never able to secure the appropriation he required in order to make his project operative, thus these applications were doubtless thrown into the scrap basket.

At this time the Knights of Columbus, who during the war had sternly refused to introduce women into their overseas' service, suddenly decided, as I have always insisted, that as I was neither young nor beautiful they could safely ask me to go over in their interests to travel about through their still existing centres, to make suggestions as to their peace needs and to tie up any loose ends of their work which I might happen to find.

Thus I sailed away to serve both our Government and this great organisation to the best of my ability.

Of all my experiences in life I think that this reached the climax of my enjoyment.

I was in splendid physical condition and the word "tired" was never in my vocabulary, although I had just celebrated my sixty-third birthday.

On reaching France I revelled for the first time in the luxury of going about in a car which was militarised.

The U.S.A. on the door was a magic sign. We never had to stop at an octroi, our papers were never examined, gasoline could be had in every barrack yard by merely showing our passbook. Privileges such as I had never dreamed of were ours for the asking. No speed laws were imposed, no restrictions were in evidence. In fact, of all spoiling habits easily acquired and never to be forgotten this was the most agreeable.

I was told that, discouraging as it might seem, my errand so far as the plan of addressing audiences was concerned was hopeless.

The men had been practically talked to death by representatives of every welfare organisation then operating abroad.

Crossing on the ship, I had made the acquaintance of a Y.M.C.A. secretary who hailed from one of our middle-west states. He explained that he and his wife had found themselves hard up so that this job seemed as good to them as any in sight. This fact had decided his vocation. I inquired how his duties functioned. He said nothing was easier, that on the transport ships he generally "expounded" the Scriptures during the voyage. I asked the size of his audiences. He replied, "Oh, about thirty!" This on ships which were carrying about four thousand, but he didn't seem in the least discouraged by the small percentage of attendance.

"Then what do you do after landing?"

"I just go to our headquarters and tell the boss I need a big tent. A notice is put out that there will be a revival meeting, after which I get busy and round up every man in sight."

"How large are the audiences then?"

"Oh, we get about fifteen hundred at a clip."

"What do you say to them?"

"I tell them what they are missing by not being Christians,

that they are a Godless crew and that this is perhaps their last chance to save their souls."

"But," persisted I, "how do you know that their souls are not already saved?"

"Say," looking at me with a certain contempt, "don't you know that I never take any chances with them rough-necks?"

The way of the transgressor seemed at the moment indeed hard.

But this taught me my lesson. Whatever happened, I determined not to "round up" my audiences. If the unprotected lads didn't want to listen to me, they should go scot free.

My first experience was at Le Mans, where in the K. of C. club house about two hundred had crowded in. I was asked to repeat this talk to some three hundred more on the following morning.

Then I went on to Bordeaux and to St. Nazaire with the audiences ever increasing. The K. of C. secretaries were called "Casey." In the minds of the boys this didn't seem to be quite the proper trade-mark for me, so suddenly I found myself referred to as "Mother Casey," by which name I was known during my entire trip. At the end of a fortnight I was surprised to receive a wire from the General Headquarters in Paris, to report there at once.

I responded as quickly as possible, and thus had my first audience with General Pershing. He looked at me quizzically, and I know wanted to address me as "young woman." He had the habit of gallantry, but he couldn't quite get to this.

"What hypnotic influence have you been using, Miss Marbury? My officers report that you are playing to full houses."

I laughed and answered: "For thirty years, General, I've been learning the secret."

"I want you," he continued, "to take your itinerary hereafter from me—beginning to-morrow at the Stadium, just outside of Paris. We have three thousand men stationed there,

and Colonel Roberts, who is in charge, has assured me that at eleven o'clock you will have a big crowd to listen to you."

"Very well, sir ; that suits me all right if I can make my voice carry."

"No fear of that. I am glad that we agree."

This interview was short and to the point, so under these conditions I began my obedience to army orders.

On reaching the Stadium next day I was faced with the fact that I was to stand in the open in front of the grandstand, which acted as a huge sounding board and which held about four thousand. When I looked at the towering rows and rows of men, I could readily believe that this was no over-estimate of its capacity. However, General Pershing to the contrary, I was not sure that I could pitch my voice so that it really would be heard. Throwing back my head, I tried the effect by directing the tone toward the top rows.

"Say, fellows, can you hear me up there ? " I cried.

Judge of my relief when the answer came back :

"Sure we can hear you, you're all right, go to the mat ! "

CHAPTER LV

I FOUND our troops everywhere in a very restless and disgruntled frame of mind. They resented the delays which still kept them in France. Their one idea was to get home. They had played the game. Hanging around in semi-idleness was boring. Nothing amused them any more. The novelty had worn off. I sensed this psychology at once. I never talked about the war, but about actualities and the future. America, not France, was my theme. Even when I was with men who were minus arms and legs they wanted diversion, not sympathy.

Thus a good laugh went far to help the situation, and many a one we had together.

I was speaking one night at Romorantin in a very large balloon tent. The place was packed to overflowing. The young Jews seemed my strong patrons, and as usual were on hand early so as to be assured of the best seats. Suddenly an Irishman appeared, steering toward the front middle section, only to find every place taken. He was evidently not for Prohibition, and his temper did not seem of the best. Standing and shouting, he exclaimed: "Things have come to a pretty pass in this bum crowd, when the O'Briens have no chance to hear Mother Casey because them dirty Kikes have grabbed every decent seat."

Realising that in another minute we were in for a scrap, with a tone of clarion authority, I cried: "Sit down, O'Brien! Behave yourself. If you hadn't come in so late you would have known that I have just opened a Jewish Chapter of the Knights of Columbus."

He accepted my statement, rushed over to his presumably

new associates, grasping each and every one of them fraternally by the hand.

On another occasion I was sitting outside of a big Red Cross building with some twenty lads gathered about me. I had noticed a long, lank, oldish fellow who was uninterruptedly chewing gum, and whose personality was not unlike that of Will Rogers. Two youngsters were discussing the ever popular theme, just "girls." One expressed his preference for a blonde, whereas the other favoured a brunette. At last they decided that the matrimonial choice didn't make much difference after all, because in case of need the divorce court was always a solution.

The elderly gentleman, whom I discovered hailed from Nebraska, and who until that moment had never broken his silence, drawled out :

" You fellers seem to think *deevorce* is easy ! "

" Listen to Pop ! What do you know about that ? "

" Oh, enough I reckon. It's a pretty costly business. If you go into it, you'll have to dig down pretty deep into your jeans ! "

" Say, you're a wise guy all right, but this is somethin' I bet you know nuthin' about ! "

" I don't, don't I ? Wal, I reckon I must know sumthin' considerin' I'm payin' alimony now to three dames in the States ! "

Our boys' sense of humour rarely failed, and it was comparatively easy to turn away their wrath.

Reason also went a long way with them. In one place there were a lot of German prisoners directly opposite a contingent of three hundred of our negroes. I found the latter surly and resentful because they had discovered that the same rations were being served to them as to the prisoners.

They kept jumping up to investigate the latter's chow while their own grew cold and unappetising.

When I realised the situation I called their attention to the folly of their conduct, saying that if I were in their places I

would never allow the Boches to ruin my meals, that if I found my soup cold on their account I would kick myself for being so many kinds of a fool. My logic was unanswerable, and there were no more grouchy faces. Soon the jazz jingled on the old piano and the feet twinkled. The sun had broken out.

It was difficult for me to contemplate with complacency the increasing marriages between our negroes and the white girls. There was no federal law to stop this, and no moral suasion seemed to produce much effect. One day at St. Nazaire I dropped into a church and there saw four such couples waiting for the nuptial ceremony to be performed.

In this same place, walking along the ocean esplanade, it was not an uncommon sight to find a white mother nursing a black baby.

One day the colonel of a regiment sent for me to see whether I could convince a certain local shopkeeper that he should not permit the contemplated alliance of his very young sister with a swarthy buddy who was unusually typical of his race.

As I spoke French fluently the colonel thought that I might explain the situation as we saw it.

I found the Frenchman polite but wholly indifferent to my arguments.

I drew a picture of the social discomfiture of the young woman once she found herself in America. I emphasised the unpleasantness of her prospective environment, but all to no purpose.

The brother, shrugging his shoulders, merely replied that he could do nothing, that he could not interfere with love's young dream.

Finally, as my last card, I said, "But you wouldn't allow your sister to marry one of your colonials."

"They are different," he answered. "They are savages."

"And our darkies, what do you think of them?" I asked.

"Why, they are perfect gentlemen," he replied.

I saw that there was nothing to be done. The marriage took place the following week. It was afterwards explained

to me by a friend of his that the brother in question was the guardian of the girl as both parents were dead, that he had to support her, that he could not afford to make her any settlement, or "dot" as it is called. That to find a man so disinterested as to not ask for any was indeed wonderful, and that once she was at such a distance as America, that even if she should be in any financial difficulty that he, the brother, would not then be called upon to help her out or to take care of her children as they came along.

This reasoning was certainly very un-American and another proof of what I have always maintained, namely, that the Latins and Anglo-Saxons rarely speak the same language. It seemed as though our swarthy soldier was the better fellow of the two, and how often when I saw our negroes staggering back from the front, literally shot to pieces, I realised that their blood which had flowed was the same colour as that of their white brothers, and that the women who wept for them shed tears which were identical.

I was soon sent to Brest, where we still had over one hundred thousand men in camp. Pontarnesin, two miles out, was like a great city. The road was always very crowded and very dusty. I was booked to speak twice a day on an average, and the camp was so vast that the audience was sectional and varied. Occasionally I was loaned to the navy.

One night, at the peril of life and limb, I was taken out to the flagship *Bridgeport*, which seemed a frightening distance from the pier. The launch was dancing so merrily that I dreaded to leave the solid ground. As we neared the ship my heart sank, for there hanging on the side was a wretched little rope ladder swaying in the wind. Turning to the young officer in charge of our boat, I asked him whether for one moment he thought I would risk my life attempting such a feat as to climb on board. He said the crew would make our boat secure. Two youths then proceeded to hook us up to a little platform which was bobbing about like a cork. Two others were looking on as ornaments.

Entirely regardless of discipline, I said : " Let those other two get busy. I need the whole crew to get me up that scaling ladder."

With the utmost difficulty the " stunt " was accomplished. Half-way up I saw an officer waiting on the deck to formally receive me.

" Come down and help me," I exclaimed. " You're no good to me there !"

Having thus demoralised the navy, I spent rather a nice evening. I found a large audience easy to amuse. To my surprise no one knew why sailors were called " Gobs." I was as ignorant as the others, but suddenly had a luminous idea which inspired me to say :

" I know why you are ' Gobs.' G. O. B. stands for God's Own Boys."

This seemed to carry over so that subsequently the explanation went the rounds.

One of my many experiences, showing how thoroughly we were detested by the French at that time, concerned a conversation I overheard while crossing the large public square in Brest, which had always been known as the Place d'Armes, but which a few months before had been changed to the " Place du President Wilson." Two ladies were gazing at the recently erected sign and were volubly denouncing the President as the cause of all their country's misery. No epithet of abuse remained in their vocabulary.

When they paused for breath I stepped up to them, and said :

" Ladies, your conversation has been most edifying to me, an American, but I must remind you that only a few months ago you had to choose whether this square was to be the Place du President Wilson or the Place du Kaiser."

Having shot my '75 I turned on my heel, leaving the objectors to their own reflections.

The war-brides who were waiting an opportunity to sail were a queer lot. In a group of four hundred there were not a

dozen who seemed to me really good-looking or attractive. Never have I seen such a collection. They had come from all over, most of them apparently delighted to have wedding-rings on their fingers, for with his pay and the low rate of exchange every doughboy was rated as a millionaire. Many of our men must have been ornamental liars, judging from the description of their home towns as given to these baby-brides. I asked one of the girls where her husband lived. She answered: "O-ee-o." I inquired the name of the town. She replied that it was a place as large as Paris, that there were many theatres there, wonderful shops, all the fashions, that gaiety was continuous and wealth abundant.

"But the name," I insisted. "Tell me the name."

"Ah, madame, it is hard to pronounce. I will write it for madame."

She scribbled it on a bit of paper. It was Xenia, Ohio, opposite Dayton. No further comment is necessary. How often I have thought of that young woman's frame of mind when she faced the reality.

Occasionally we had an excitement when some husband would try to slip away on the transport, leaving his wife in Brest. Then the services of an M.P. would be employed to drag him off the boat by the leg and to restore him to the waiting lady who had been abandoned on the pier. However, these connubial misunderstandings were usually straightened out by the officer-in-charge and by a few days of short rations dealt out to the culprit.

I found the best spirit prevailing everywhere in the huts of the Knights of Columbus. The magic words: "Everyone Welcome. Everything Free," did the trick. Jam, biscuits, cigarettes, chocolates were words with which to conjure, but behind these creature comforts stood sympathy, an entire absence of any sectarian spirit and a human understanding which was unfailing. The work done by this organisation overseas needs no endorsement. It has become a matter of history due to the reports brought back by our two million

men. As administrators the commissioners in Paris, Edward L. Hearn and Lawrence Murray, were beyond criticism. Their popularity was only equalled by their efficiency. Splendid team-work was done between the head office here, over which that very able gentleman, William P. Larkin, presided, and the active forces which were overseas.

I was proud to be working under the auspices of such an organisation, and never once did I experience anything at its hands but the greatest courtesy and consideration.

There was never any friction between the K. of C. and the General Staff, for whereas my itinerary was military, my personal comfort was always the responsibility of those representing the Knights of Columbus. Everything was foreseen and every accommodation was provided. I was always accompanied by one of their secretaries, who saw to it that I was well looked after.

During the entire three months I was spared both hardships and discomforts. I was never in a train as a K. of C., militarised motor took me over all the ground. It would have been impossible for me to have travelled under more agreeable conditions.

A fine understanding existed with the Jewish Welfare Board, and with the Salvation Army, but somehow the Y.M.C.A., in their treatment of the various problems, while very commendable, and in many ways admirable, operated from such a different standpoint that it was difficult for our organisation to assimilate the same views. However, there was plenty of work for everybody.

CHAPTER LVI

I CANNOT turn my back upon Brest, where I had been stationed for many weeks, without referring to the outlying segregation camp, which numbered as its patients and prisoners some five thousand men. One could imagine the words blazoned at the entrance of Dante's Hell, "leave all hope behind," for the utter dreadful dreariness of the place was one's first impression.

It seemed isolated from human intercourse. There were no visitors allowed. The nursing was chiefly in the hands of men. My introduction to it happened in this fashion.

I was surprised one morning to receive a message from the officer there in command, asking whether he might call at my hotel. I received him and learned that the object of his visit was to ask whether I would be willing to give my talks within the segregation camp as well as without. The major said that, of course, I would never be ordered there, but that it would be an act of mercy if I would go as a volunteer. I felt no hesitancy of any kind, so cheerfully consented, the only difficulty being to squeeze in the time.

However, this was ultimately arranged so that I could undertake the additional engagements."

I soon became absorbed in this work, for my heart ached when I found myself facing those hundreds of mere lads, as were most of them, who might have exclaimed with immortal Frou-Frou: "An instant of folly, and this is where I have been brought."

Many of them were just "mother's boys." Many of them had young sweethearts in America who were waiting for their return. Few of them were vicious. Few of them were



Photograph by Hartsook

ELISABETH MARBURY (1920)

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degenerate. Few of them were hardened. Their misguided drifting had been along the line of the least resistance in which ignorance played no small a part.

I soon established a genuine confidence between them and myself. My visits were always welcome. My simple talks seemed to strike a chord of sympathy. Across my crystal ball I can even now see groups of these lads sitting around me in the twilight upon the grass. To them I was indeed their Mother Casey. I was able, thank God, to dwell upon the happy years ahead which would blot out even the memory of the shadow by which for the time being they were encompassed.

Little by little they grew to realise that the sun had set only to rise again.

Each day as it was checked off would bring them nearer to their coveted freedom and to their restored health.

Youth was on their side with its natural optimism and buoyancy. Above all, they were once more looking up and not down.

From them I drew a deeper inspiration than it was possible for me to give, and when finally my work among them was over, I seemed to have learned more of God's tenderness in dealing with his little children than I had ever known before.

CHAPTER LVII

As I journeyed over the wide area where our troops had passed I began to realise the enormous scope of our undertaking and the miracle of our accomplishment. From the coast where our forces landed to the very edge of the last trench I saw nothing but reminders of the fact that we had sent overseas five million tons of raw material, and this with only a loss of seventy-five thousand tons due to submarine attacks.

At Bordeaux stood the great wharf and storehouse which had cost us one million dollars. From there a road had been built which was a feat in engineering, and which wound like a wriggling serpent until it reached the upper city. Endless lines of telegraph poles stretched along miles of highway. Sheds in which bakeries were operating and great refrigerating plants in which meat was kept, so that its freshness was a certainty, machine shops, repair centres, electric-power houses and all the rest studded the landscape as far as the eye could reach.

Thrown into scrap heaps were cars and trucks of every description, machine-guns, tanks, motor-cycles, engines. Everything, in fact, which could possibly be needed or anticipated for the conveyance, the care and the feeding of an army which each incoming transport only served to increase.

At the moment of the armistice a steady stream of fighting forces was pouring in. A continuous supply of iron and steel, of beef and provisions, of clothing and equipment, of arms and of munitions was being received at the docks and distributed throughout that portion of France which had been especially allotted to our occupation. We built our own railways, we constructed our own bridges, we used our own cars and our own

locomotives. We were providing for a long war. Too little has been said of our industrial army, which was always active and alert. Our men could never have fought at the front had it not been for those who were working at the rear. The latter were given no opportunity for bravery, there was no Croix de Guerre or Distinguished Service Medal dangling before their eyes in honourable brilliancy, yet they were all part and parcel of the great mosaic which was then paving the fields of Europe. The pattern required myriads of tiny stones, providing the colours upon which the vast design depended.

How many of these silent workers dreamed of those battle-fields where they might in turn emerge from the greyness of the tasks which had been their fate, and yet the war had ended without their ever having been given their chance to share in the absolute struggle and in the intoxicating victory.

The shrapnel of disappointment had entered their souls, and the knife of discouragement had severed their very heart strings.

This was the frame of mind into which many had fallen, for while their faces were turning homeward, they knew that they were to tramp through their village streets as bakers, as butchers, as ice men and plumbers, as carpenters and painters, as machinists and chauffeurs, as electricians, and as day labourers, but not as heroes who could boast of Catigny, of Château Thierry, of Belleau Woods, of Montfaucon, and of the Argonne. My heart used to ache for these lads as I read in their faces their thoughts which were so rarely expressed and which accounted in no small degree for their restlessness and for their sadness. It was part of my task to help them to a greater satisfaction in the duties which they had so uncomplainingly and so faithfully performed, duties which neglected for a day or even for an hour would have threatened the collapse of our entire military system. The liquidation of our material was already well under way in the summer of 1919. To transport it back to America was out of the question. It had to be sold on the spot and for what it would bring. The result

was that it was practically given away. The trading in these things became a source of profit to thousands of foreign speculators.

The cash charges which stood against our Government were fantastic. We paid for everything, almost for the air we breathed. Nothing was free. Had the war continued another six months we would have found ourselves in debt to France which we had helped to save.

The scales would have balanced heavily against us.

I was told of one incident when our officers-in-charge were making a price for a quantity of motor-cycles in excellent condition. The representative of the French Government refused, it was said, to accept the figure, claiming that the cycles were worthless and should be liquidated merely as scrap iron.

Our representative finally agreed to this, provided that in the bill of sale these perfectly good cycles were so described. The price as settled was about ten dollars for each machine. As soon as the deal had gone through, the doughboys, who knew the terms of the transaction, proceeded to reduce the material to the veritable scrap iron as set forth. Every motor was demolished with yells of derision.

One of my most interesting experiences was a visit paid to Maréchal and Madame Foch in their manor in Northern Brittany. I had already met them in Paris on several occasions, but rejoiced in seeing them in their home and in finding the maréchal in civilian clothes for the first time in five years. Once more he was revelling in the luxury of private life. The house was simple and unpretentious, yet just the kind of place where one would have expected to find him. A small chapel stood at the left of the approach, and I was especially touched when madame asked me to step inside, there to join in the daily prayers which they offered for the repose of the soul of their only son who had been killed in the war. As I knelt by them reverently, the spirit of peace which passeth all understanding seemed to descend in our midst. A great grief had become a shrine.

CHAPTER LVIII

Nor once but many times during the war and after the armistice I travelled over the territory which has become popularly designated as Devastated France. Much has been said of it, much has been read of it. In many minds the impression exists that practically the whole of France was laid waste, whereas while the destruction was almost complete in eight departments, and while fighting occurred in two more, still the fact remains that in addition there were seventy-seven which were never affected except by the increasing prosperity due to the reckless expenditures of the Allies, and of the various organisations which either passed through or occupied them. The actual area which was invaded was approximately one eleventh of French territory, and about one sixteenth of the entire population was affected. It is perhaps fair to note in this connection that much damage was also caused by the allied guns.

And the fact that the valuable resources of those rich provinces, Alsace and Lorraine, had been added to the map of France must not be underestimated.

In the beginning it was claimed that 25 per cent. of the economic wealth of the country had been destroyed by the enemy. Later this statement was found to be considerably exaggerated, until it has been admitted by the French themselves that it has not exceeded 10 per cent.

The official reports of the French savings banks have frequently attested that never have the deposits in them been as large as during and subsequent to the war.

By encouraging the German co-operation almost at the

outset, Belgium was rapidly rebuilt, but for one reason and another this work in France has moved much more slowly.

The amount contributed from this country for this restoration has already reached an unprecedented total. Miss Anne Morgan and Mrs. A. M. Dike have worked unceasingly and with unflagging zeal to rebuild more than one hundred villages in the Aisnes, to provide the peasants with tractors and farming implements, to reconstruct homes, to teach hygienic and domestic science; in fact, to raise the general standard of living throughout the area in which they have so indefatigably operated.

Unluckily, the Germans who remained in the vicinity during the early days of this agricultural aid in the Aisnes benefited several times from a generosity which was not intended.

On one occasion, when they were only about fifteen miles distant, they swooped down in the neighbourhood and seized whatever was handy; among other things all of the lovely white leghorn chickens which had been thoughtfully transported from Versailles in order to spread this very excellent breed throughout the Department. As some of the hens had been selected in America for their high grade of points, it did seem a pity to have them fed to the Boches.

The loss, however, of the labour which the committee had put in, and of the farming implements which were in the railroad freight house at Noyon were a far more serious matter; all of which goes to prove how necessary it is to be careful in the selection of one's neighbours.

Without being iconoclastic, it is to be hoped that in rebuilding these villages that a little modern plumbing will be introduced and a little modern cleanliness engendered. A franco phile once remarked that "the French had souls above plumbing." While this may be an uplifting virtue, still a little sewerage is not to be wholly despised.

The problem of how to impose taxation in France is not a new one. The people chronically refuse to be taxed to any extent. The French Government is nearly bankrupt, but the

lower and upper classes are still well off. The real suffering is with those who are living on small incomes or on modest salaries, owing to the dwarfed purchasing power of the franc and the increased cost of living; a condition, however, universal in all countries. Some very significant figures appear in the Research Report of the National Industrial Conference Board. There, in Table 14, we note that in the fiscal year 1920-1921 the per capita taxation on the pre-war purchasing power basis in the United Kingdom was \$46.07, for the United States \$40.59, for Germany \$19.46 and for France \$15.28.

The above requires no comment.

So far as making any gesture even of repaying the vast sums owed to this country is concerned, the only nation which seems to feel its obligation and which is liquidating it is Great Britain. The excuse given by France is that when she collects from Germany she will pay her debts, but it is certainly a doubtful question whether her present occupation of the Ruhr leads us to any very optimistic belief that we shall ever be paid. An army is an expensive luxury. It certainly becomes in this instance "a new way of paying old debts."

The part that Great Britain played in the war has been submerged to a very great extent by her traditional reticence, nevertheless when one has travelled from the sea through the Somme and Picardie; when one has visited and understood the battlefields of Flanders; when one has faced that remorseless ridge at Vimy where German guns drenched the plucky Tommies not once, but over and over again, with bullets and poison gas as they stormed heights which it cost thousands of lives to take, one begins to realise faintly the magnificent courage of those British soldiers and the inspiring leadership of their officers. Sacrifice with them was the order of the day. They fought on and on: English, Scottish, Australians, Canadians, Irish, men from all over the British Empire, who were there for one job and one only, to mop up the enemy and to rid the world of the menace which had descended upon it.

From those early days when England, so poorly equipped

and so hideously unready, threw in her strength without a moment's moral hesitation, they fought on and on, sometimes as has been said with her back to the wall, but never flinching, never weakening, never doubtful in her attitude.

The price she paid is still in the process of compilation. Not only did she suffer through the heavy death toll of her manhood, but her economic losses have been beyond compute.

The pinching poverty, the strained finances, the need of retrenchment has been felt to some degree in every British household; yet so far as boasting of what they contributed to the ultimate allied victory is concerned, they have been persistently silent. They have never whined nor complained. They have asked no favours. They have made no bid for sympathy. They have behaved like true sports.

It is popular in certain quarters to accuse them of greed and of selfishness, to influence inimical imagination by always pointing out that the underlying motive of everything which England does springs from the soul of avarice. This might be impressive were we not in our lucid moments confronted with the inquiry as to the basic impulses of the other nations who were for a while our companions in arms.

If England is actuated only from love of gain, at least it can be said of her that she is so intelligent as to make the gesture seem almost sympathetic. If she has set out to rob the world, she will do so in a gentlemanly fashion and her highwaymen will conduct themselves with a bearing which will be attractive.

The war was over in 1918 so far as the British Empire was concerned. She buried her fears and her hates in the grave of her last soldier. She took off her Sam Brown belt and replaced it with a kit of tools. She will trade with her enemies, not despoil them. Her policy is one of common sense and not of hysteria. She does not propose to continue a war which ended with the armistice. Hatred and revenge are luxuries which she finds too expensive. She will rule through industry and not through triumphal arches. Her iron and steel will not be used for destruction, but for construction.

Once I found myself facing an audience which was most antagonistic to Great Britain. It was at the time when our Irish friends were far from any settlement of their home cause. It took no little courage to voice even a temperate expression in favour of the English. Nevertheless, in the summing up of the respective accomplishments of our allies, I began :

“ As for England— ” but before proceeding my voice was drowned by a chorus of cat-calls, of hisses and even worse.

I stood firmly, and waited until the hubbub had died down, then stepping to the edge of the stage, and looking full at the gallery from which most of the disturbance sprang, I exclaimed :

“ I am well aware that you do not love England, but I refuse to leave this platform until I have made you respect her ! ”

The effect was instantaneous, and the tide of sentiment was turned until my closing remarks were greeted with a thundering applause.

I have always claimed that the one alliance which would really prove a steadying hand at the international helm is that between our two great Anglo-Saxon countries.

Even if we do not “ love each other,” we should “ respect each other ” and become sensible working partners. To keep us apart, to sow discord between us, to inspire us mutually with envy and malice is, of course, the policy of the nations which dread the effect of such a unity as I describe. Their one desire is to separate us. Their one fear is that we shall come together.

However, if the common sense of these two powerful countries registers sufficiently, we shall sooner or later be able to radio our joint judgment and our determination to the uttermost ends of the earth.

The Anglo-Saxons may be old and calculating, they may be callous, they may be stolid, yet they are as a rule safe bets, and at moments when reason should prevail, are not apt to lose their moral balance nor indulge in emotions which are senseless and unremunerative.

Nations as well as individuals should be protected against themselves.

And how have the Russians fared in the memory of those friends and allies with whom they had cast their lot during those first years of the war ?

Do we find even a reflex of appreciation of what they did in those early days, when they put up that splendid fight along the Eastern Front, and when they drove the wedge into the enemy's army, thus forcing a division of its strength and diverting its forcefulness of attack ?

How many now pay tribute to those disintegrated and straggling legions who had fought on and on, month after month, unshod, unclothed and unfed, thousands of human beings the echo of whose misery was never even heard beyond their own frontier ?

Without weapons of war, without munitions for defence, yet on and on they bravely struggled, betrayed by their friends and slaughtered by their foes.

Was it any wonder that at last, when falling by the way from sheer cold and hunger, they yielded to the subtle persuasion of those who at least promised them the security of bread and shelter ?

The debt to the Russian people remains nevertheless inscribed upon the pages of history, crying aloud for a moral liquidation while rank injustice prevents even its acknowledgment.

Yet there can be no such thing as oblivion for that nation which has laid down its life for its friends.

CHAPTER LIX

It was not until the presidential campaign of 1920 that I was literally flung into the new experiences of a political convention. To attend as a spectator and to attend as a delegate are widely different. I had frequently been present as the former, but it was not until I had been selected to go to the Democratic Convention as one of the delegates at large from the Empire State, my running mate being Governor Alfred E. Smith, that I realised the importance and the interest of actually sitting on the floor of a Convention and of casting a vote.

The beautiful city of San Francisco had been selected as the place where our Convention would be held. The time was the end of June, and nothing could have been more delightful than the journey across the continent or our cordial reception by the townspeople upon arrival. Every conceivable thing had been planned for our comfort. Every possible arrangement had been made for our pleasure.

The Convention Hall itself was a model in all respects. The seating capacity ample, the ventilation perfect, and the machinery most excellent. No words of appreciation would be excessive so far as San Francisco was concerned. The crowds were very great, but the skilled handling of them robbed us of their realisation.

I had previously been appointed a member of the Executive of the National Committee, therefore I filled two offices. For this reason, I had gone a few days ahead of the general delegation, as I anticipated some preliminary meetings of the executive body.

This gave me a little time in which to get my bearings. I

felt at a glance that I was to be vastly edified and amused, for from the outset incidents were not lacking to feed a sense of humour.

On entering the lobby of my hotel I was confronted by a large poster of a conspicuous candidate, the Hon. Mitchell Palmer, taken in the familiar pose of old Dr. Munyon, who, with raised finger, claimed he was the purveyor of universal panaceas.

When I read the literature which Mr. Palmer's "boosters" were vigorously distributing, I found it quite logical that he had copied Munyon even to a pose.

No one seemed to have any definite idea as to who would prove the best man to rule the United States, for everyone was busily engaged in guessing as to which man ran the most likely chance of being elected were he nominated.

I suggested satirically that, under these circumstances, as he then seemed the nation's hero, that the name of Babe Ruth, baseball's home-run king, should not be lightly overlooked.

I found that we were rich in candidates. Never before had I imagined that there were so many citizens who wished to be presidents. They popped up from every section, and from every state. One thing these gentlemen all seemed to share in common. They were invariably presented by their sponsors as men whose private lives were pure and spotless.

It was a consoling thought that the standard of domestic life was so high, and that we belonged to a country in which marital virtue seemed so invulnerable.

I must confess that now and again I felt that there was a rich field for blackmailers to be spied in the offing; however, we were there to be solemn and credulous, not to be cynical and critical.

For days we listened to orations, for days we cast the ballots.

I began to think that the Democratic party had too many men of noble achievement and of Christian character. We were

embarrassed by our riches. So it was considerable of a relief when the victim of our final choice was the Hon. James Cox, of Ohio, who bravely buckled on his armour and sallied forth to battle: the forlorn hope in a campaign which was doomed to defeat.

A sinister influence seemed to emanate from a life-size portrait of President Woodrow Wilson which hung above the rostrum. It was badly painted, but admirably lighted. The face had a mocking expression, the lines were hard, the eyes were staring. It was a haunting thing, that portrait. One seemed forced to look at it, and to be pursued by it. How far this picture was responsible for some of our waverings I have never been able to determine.

It made me think of a little boy who, having been taken to see some great display of fireworks, gave a certain evidence of nervousness. He was asked whether he was afraid, and answered, "Not exactly, but it makes my skin jerk."

I am inclined to think that something made our skins jerk. Was it this Wilson portrait? I wonder.

Everything was debated. We had some great orators, and listened with a rare enjoyment to such men as Cummins and Cockran, although our dry friend, the Hon. William Jennings Bryan, did not score as in former conventions.

He had been hoisted by his own petard. His audience could not applaud on soft drinks. Upon previous similar occasions they had been warmed up. They had come in a genial and admiring attitude, but it was too much to expect that innocuous beverages would produce any great enthusiasm over catch phrases or over illogical arguments.

Cruel as it may seem, the man who had always proved a spell binder fell flat, and William Jennings Bryan, who for years had dominated every Democratic Convention, was listened to in a spirit of inertia, and was discounted as a force which had been spent.

It was in the lobbies of the hotels where one received the most accurate slant as to what the people were really feeling.

My chief performance seemed to be that of giving copy to the press. I was sorry for the poor news seekers in this arid valley.

The drinks taken on the quiet as ordered by the army of family physicians produced a strange effect. They seemed to induce melancholia rather than cheerfulness.

Everyone was more or less enveloped in gloom. Laughs were rare. Impulses of hilarity were restrained.

Bad jokes even were hailed as life-savers. The members of the newspaper fraternity would fall upon me pleadingly for just one story, for just one bit of news which might enliven their columns.

It was generally the unexpected which furnished the material.

One night after an eloquent lady had proclaimed her views as a strict prohibitionist she challenged the audience to bear her out in the statement that, to the disgrace of American manhood, the breath of nearly every man she met at the Convention reeked with the smell of whiskey, especially as they gathered in the corridors of the hotels.

That evening I was interviewed and asked for my experiences on the subject. I replied that I had no comment to make as I had never smelled the men's breaths.

"Does that mean," pursued my interlocutor, "that you deny the statements made by the lady orator of the afternoon?"

"I deny nothing," said I.

"Then you admit to smelling their breaths?"

"I admit nothing of the kind," I answered.

"Why not?" my questioner continued.

"For a very simple reason. I am either too modest or too fat."

This incident went the rounds, which, added to similar anecdotes, gave me the reputation of being the Court Jester of the Convention.

Under the new ruling I was duly elected as the National Committeewoman of the State of New York, the National Committeeman being my very esteemed and able friend, the

Hon. Norman E. Mack, of Buffalo, N. Y. We shall be in office until 1924, when a new election will be in order.

I made up my mind after the ordeal was over that instead of returning directly to New York I would take a trip north into Canada and back over the Canadian Pacific. I was well rewarded, for the scenery is magnificent, comparing more than favourably with the Swiss Alps.

Nowhere in the world is there a more lovely spot than Lake Louise. This in itself is worth the journey. From British Columbia eastward one marvels at the enterprise of the Canadians. They are a great race and their energies and resources seem inexhaustible.

Had it not been that we were consumed by mosquitoes in the higher altitudes all would have been delightful, but these insects seemed to us so large, so virulent and so persistent in attack, that I am inclined to believe that they are some new variety, exceeding in strength and magnitude any of the species with which we have been familiar.

I am told by my friend the eminent Arctic explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, that mosquitoes at certain seasons of the year are the bane of those who travel in the Far North.

CHAPTER LX

My last trip abroad was in 1921. It was chiefly undertaken in the interests of our business.

I spent some weeks in our London office, saw many of my old clients in Paris, among them brilliant Francis de Croisset, whom I had known from his early days. He is a Belgian by birth, but very soon was naturalised as a Frenchman. He wrote his emotions at sixteen and lived them afterwards.

He began with passionate verse, which was his prelude to side-splitting comedy.

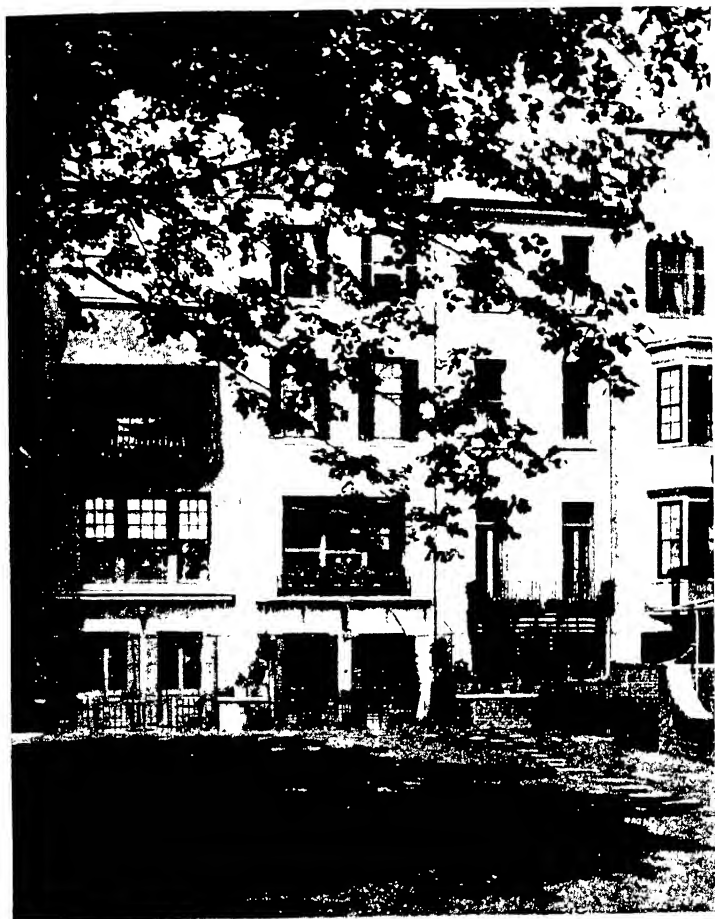
He is the author of many successes. Perhaps his best known play in America is "Arsene Lupin," dramatised from Le Blanc's novel, which was one of the first of the detective series with which we have since become so familiar.

Many are the witty sayings attributed to him.

The superb private hotel on the Place des Etats Unia in Paris, where de Croisset, his charming wife and lovely children lived until recently, was leased to President Wilson as his residence during the Peace Conference. Madame de Croisset is a daughter of that most brilliant and fascinating woman, the Comtesse Laure de Chévigné, who will never grow old, who will always be alluring and who will eternally be charming.

Recently Robert de Flers and Francis de Croisset have entered into a collaboration, a very common fashion among French authors, but one which has never appealed strongly to the Anglo-Saxon mind.

The upheaval of the war has not produced a beneficial effect upon the French stage.



ELISABETH MARBURY'S PRESENT RESIDENCE, SUTTON
PLACE, NEW YORK CITY

Too much stress is laid upon form. Too much value is attributed to manner.

What an author has to give is of less consequence than how he gives it.

The eternal triangle has served its day in every country of the globe except in France.

Adultery there still reigns as the favourite theme.

Unhappily, when the French dramatists do strike out for something different, they are apt to plunge either into morbidity or to indulge in dialogue which would make even a Rabelais blush.

There is no Ruhr to be seized in art, and the dramatists of the enemy countries will roam at will in the theatres of the world.

With a view to studying the literary output in Central Europe, I journeyed some three thousand miles in an automobile, saw many authors and talked to many publishers. My wanderings gave me an opportunity of viewing the economic condition in Germany at first hand. At all events I was able to form an individual opinion which has prevented me ever since from being hoodwinked by investigators or by journalists whose opinions were packed in their suit-cases before they ostensibly started out to form them.

Probably there is no word so abused in our vocabulary as that of "propaganda." It should be relegated once and for all to the archives.

Whenever anyone states or writes his honest conviction, then the opposite side invariably hurls forth the suggestion of propaganda.

It has become a manacle upon the public mind which would throttle and blind truth.

It is high time that it should be done away with and that the after war conditions should be viewed face to face. We have been victims of political fallacies long enough. We have been told what to think. We have had rings in our noses as we have been led to the study of contemporary mis-statements. We

have been exploited by every nation in turn. We have received and listened to representatives from every country. We have had foreign bankers send us their juggled statistics, we have had foreign statesmen present their cases as though we were a nation of imbeciles.

If our land has never been the centre of any physical disturbance, nevertheless since 1914 it has been the dumping ground of the political intrigues of Europe. We have been asked to declare ourselves. We have been asked to keep silent. We have been urged to activity. We have been influenced to inertia.

We have been lied to and bamboozled. We have been insulted and we have been cajoled.

We have been wooed until we have rejected the suitor; we have been excoriated when once he was shown the door.

It is high time that the American people should remember a few home truths, and that we should refuse to become partners with a militarism which is still stalking unchecked under the pretence of national needs and of international justice.

The day for sophistries and sentiment should be over.

What is needed in the world is economic production, and not military occupation.

Bankers and not politicians should direct international policy.

France and Germany should be industrial partners. Their only mutual protection lies in mutual trading. "Where the treasure lies there will the heart be also."

Storehouses filled with merchandise will prove a better guarantee than arsenals bulging with ammunition.

But even as individuals become bored when a tale of woe is too often poured into their ears, so will the Americans become bored if they are eternally asked to listen to the grievances of their neighbours. And just as private doors are finally closed to private bores, I predict that it will not be long before our national gates will close with a dull thud upon those who are

wearing out our patience and our forbearance. There is no surer way of turning a friend into a foe than by lending him money in his distress which he conveniently forgets to repay.

There are moments when one is forced to realise to what an extent a sense of humour is sadly lacking in the French race, for only recently one wonders why, at a time when France was eager to enter the Ruhr, when she wished to intensify in the eyes of the world the memory of Germany's misdeeds, did she with beating of drums and waving of flags insist upon glorifying the celebration of Napoleon's conquests and of Napoleon's triumphs. It was certainly not an auspicious moment to recall to memory that greatest of all history's highwaymen, whose battle-cry was cruel devastation and ruthless pillage.

This can best be explained by the fact that France has been, is, and probably will always be, a military nation, despite her reiterated assertion to the contrary. On July 1st, 1914, the great Benedictine preacher, Dom Besse, is quoted as saying in a speech : " War is an essential to Peace. When we wish to glorify God we refer to Him as the God of Battle. This is why God has decreed that battles and wars are inevitable, and this is why those peoples who fail to recognise this principle are doomed to extermination."

History records that the wars of France have furnished the foundation of her art, and her great saint, Jeanne d'Arc, blazed the trail of her canonisation through the march of a conquering army.

I have in my possession a recent letter from a French author which is written on paper of a very sanguinary colour and on which is stamped the word " guerre," visible only by holding the sheet to the light, which naturally suggests that holding things to the light is sometimes very clarifying.

The war of 1914 has been fought and won.

Peace is being fought, and is not yet won. Instead of sending statesmen and generals from one country to another, instead of planning conferences which, as a rule, lead to naught, instead of projecting official visits which are costly and

unproductive, the men of business insight and financial foresight should get together and face the international situation as it really is.

Oratory and sentimentalism should be replaced by facts and figures.

If the bankers of the world would combine for the extension of industrial credits, if they would find some practical method by which exchanges could be standardised and stabilised, if the Treaty of Versailles, drawn at a time when men saw red rather than azure, could now thoughtfully be revised and reconstructed, then there might be a happy issue out of the affliction into which all the nations of the world are plunged; but until hatred is discouraged, until the promise of peace seems as vital as the echo of war, until intelligence supplants emotion, international problems will remain unsolved. As for the United States, which is technically standing aloof, she is forced to contemplate her export trade falling day by day, her imports blocked by a prohibitive tariff, and the high value of her dollar becoming the Frankenstein which is slaying her. Sooner or later she will have to recognise that, of all the nations which took part in the great conflict, the United States is, perhaps, the one which will pay the highest indemnity.

It is extraordinary to find that in no other country is the war mentality still so apparent as in America.

It seems to pervade every drawing-room, to colour every debate and to infest every forum.

In many circles it is a fetish "not-to-forget."

In many minds the guns are still booming, and the walls of their souls are plastered with dug-outs and trench lines. Until this rampant spirit of continuous conflict is crushed, until hatred is replaced by love, until forgiveness is no empty phrase, then, and not till then, will the Peace of God descend.

CHAPTER LXI

THE last struggle in which I am engaged is a militant plea for Temperance while absolutely opposing Prohibition.

I insist that the former is the virtue of Christians whereas the latter is the vice of the Mohammedans.

To restore liberty to the American people, to further reason and not fanaticism, to advocate truth and to unmask hypocrisy seem to me not an unworthy mission.

To those who may be befogged by the issues and who remain ignorant as to the facts, they owe it to themselves to become enlightened.

Because a thing looks good is no proof that it is good.

Many a reform movement tossed into the air falls with a dead thud to explode in the soil which it strikes.

To project a law is one thing; to execute it is another.

In this country we are law-ridden. Our statute books are becoming ponderous and unwieldy. The cost of law enforcement is increasing day by day. The query arises as to whether the cure is not infinitely more dangerous than the disease.

Admitting, for instance, that there was a trail of evil upon the heels of intemperance, how trivial it was in comparison with the destructive forces which the 18th Amendment has let loose upon our people. Drugs, disease, drunkenness and disaster have followed in its wake.

Bootlegging is now the most popular and the most prosperous industry in the land.

Legislators have become perjurers, and law makers are now law breakers.

The demoralisation of our youth is a ghastly certainty.

Alcohol is taking the place of mother's milk. Never in the history of civilisation have young boys and girls indulged in strong drink as they are doing to-day.

There are thousands of pious prohibitionists who refuse to recognise this fact, and who point with complacency at their own boys and girls as convincing examples of the untruth of such slander; but let these same people frequent ballrooms, dance halls, private parties and public restaurants in the majority of our large cities, and they will find the hip flasks in evidence and the consequent conditions a sorry spectacle.

Furthermore, what of our commerce, what of our revenue, what of our taxes while we supinely sit by doing nothing to restore the normal conditions which for the time being are so dislocated?

Look at our Merchant Marine, which is vitally important to the wealth of our country.

What has become of it? Where shall we find its rapidly dwindling tonnage?

The answer is simple. Its ships are being towed into anchorage where their timbers will rot and where their usefulness will be destroyed.

An amusing incident illustrating the misplaced zeal of some of the Federal officers occurred in our office building as I was passing through the hall.

A youth approached me, explaining his official importance, and stating that he was making a search of the premises.

I asked what he was expecting to find in the Christian Science Rooms or in the dental offices, both of which professions are largely represented in the Aeolian building.

"As for our Company," I continued, "I only wish that you might find something in our midst. Alas, we are as dry as a chalky knee-joint."

Gazing at me reproachfully, the Prohibition agent exclaimed: "What a pity it is that you feel as you do! I am sure that you come from a Christian family and that you were brought up 'dry.'"

"Ah," said I, "this is where you are mistaken. I was brought up by a wet nurse."

Prohibition is no longer an experiment. It has been tried out with the dire result that it has derailed the morale of America.

We have become a nation of liars, of hypocrites and of law breakers.

Let us keep the saloons closed, but let us restore liberty to the homes. Let us have the right to brew beer which is not murderous and to manufacture wine which is not suicidal.

Let us walk, not sneak. Let us be honest once more to ourselves and to our citizenship.

And now, as I come to my last chapter, my crystal ball refuses to reflect to-day's actualities, therefore I shall refrain from any reference to those with whom I am now in contact.

Their nearness to me whether as creators in literature and in art, or their proximity as valued friends, would colour my estimate and would bias my view.

I would be writing without the perspective of a background and with a foreground which would not be in focus.

Should I attempt any summing up of their personal traits or talents, my crystal ball might reflect merely a misty misconception of them.

By and by I may return to a closer study of these contemporaries. I may even frame them as individual silhouettes.

My present to-day must automatically become my yesterday, and the haze of the morning sun will very soon be dissipated by the afternoon's shadows, so let me ring down the curtain, not because I feel that my life is over but because I have reached the present year when my experiences would only be a daily diary.

I am now sixty-seven, yet am looking forward, making plans ahead which two decades cannot cover and dreaming of a future in which I may still be privileged to play a part.

I do not want to die in a state of rust. I wish to keep the shield bright so long as my hand is strong enough to hold it.

Years in themselves mean nothing. How we live them means everything.

Smoked glasses before the mind are more to be dreaded than smoked glasses before the eyes.

Do not shut up our outdoor souls within our indoor limitations.

If your spirit keeps alive, if your brain remains, if your sympathies do not shrivel, if you realise that the immortal that is within you can carry you on and on, even to the very moment of the great passing, then you will never know age in the accepted sense; and when God in his mercy calls you, He will find you ready for that short journey for which your whole life has been but a preparation.

You will be like the old ship brought into its last port.

No more battling with heavy seas, no more fighting with tempestuous waves.

The dawn of peace is upon the waters, and looking up you will feel that all of your trivial weakness, all of your petty ambitions, all of your foolish judgments, all of your ignorant intolerances, all of your puerile jealousies have at last fallen from you, conquered by the transcendent mercy and understanding of the God who gave you life.

As a little child you came into the world. As a little child you will go out from it.

THE END

